A Triple Paradox:

Affixed to a

COUNTER-MURE

Raiſed againſt the Furious Batteries of

Reſtraint, Slander and Poverty,

The three Grand Engines

OF

The *World*, the *Fleſh* and the *Devil.*

By Major *GEORGE WITHER,*

Who, now beleagured by their Forces, throws out unto them this DEFIANCE.

The ſaid *PARADOX* maintains theſe Particulars,

That Confinement *is more ſafe than* Liberty,
Slander *more advantageous than* Praiſe,
Poverty *more profitable than* Riches.

Nuſquam, non poteſt eſſe virtuti locus. Seneca.

LONDON,
Printed for the Author. 1661.

A Triple Paradox:

Printed to a

COUNTER-MURE

Raised against the Furious Batteries of

Restraint, Slander and Poverty,

The three Grand Engines

OF

The *World*, the *Flesh* and the *Devil*.

By Major GEORGE WITHER,

Who now belongs to the Worms, throws
out unto them this DEFIANCE.

The said SMA.DOX maintains these Particulars,

The Continent is more safe than Liberty,
Slander more adverse than Truth,
Poverty more profitable than Riches.

Nosquam, non pauperiam, sed tantum dedecus. Seneca.

LONDON,
Printed for the Author. 1661.

The Author, *to all those who have relieved him in his* Beleaguerement.

IT is a more blessed thing to *Give*, than to *Receive*; Therefore, having hitherto been a *Receiver* onely, I am now desirous to be a *Giver* also, though it be but of a *Nute*, or of a *Cup of cold water*; For, we are not to expect Benedictions or Acceptations, strictly answerable to the quantity or quality of our *Gifts* considered in themselves, but according to our *Purposes* and *Abilities*; which incourages mee to send you a handful of such *Fruit*, as grows upon my *WITHERD-Tree*, now almost past bearing, that by you finde it as pleasant and as wholsome, as I conceived it to be, you having therewith refreshed your selves, may if you please, pick out some of the *Kernels*, and by sowing and replanting them in your *Orchards*, preserve the *kinde* for future use, when my Tree is rotten.

I make not reckon of this *Diminutive Present*, by way of *Retribution*; For, GOD is your reward: but to be a testimonial of my Gratitude, and of my willingness to have done more, if I had been able; or rather, that it may be a memorial of *GODS Mercy* to me vouchsafed by your hands when I was deserted of the *World*, which ought never to be by mee forgotten; For, I confess, I have thereby lived to produce *this*, and whatsoever I shall do hereafter in discharge of my duty; and had else, ere this day perished from the Earth, for ought I know to the contrary, though in my greatest wants and uncertainty of *Supplies*, I was alwaies as far from a despairing *Distrust*, as if I had then possessed a Vault filled with hidden Treasures, which no man could take from mee: And (though I am yet in no more certainty in respect of *External Supplies*) GOD preserves in mee the same confidence, and I beleeve he will alwaies preserve it in mee.

This, is so great, and so extraordinary a *Mercy*, considering the many terrours, distrusts and necessities, wherewith many thousands of better men are daily exercised and proved, that I conceive my self obliged in conscience, openly to acknowledge it, both to glorifie him who vouchsafes it, and to confirm in my self and other men, our Christian hopes, by declaring what GOD hath

done for my soul, who have nothing in my self to deserve it, but what is of his gift, and who have much more of my own, which rather deserves the contrary. I am, and I hope shall ever be so far from being ashamed of my preservation by meer *Charity*, that I do esteem it a greater honour and happiness, than to have the most plentiful subsistance which the world can confer upon mee by a constant *Revenue*, with an eminent dignitary annexed: For I have seen the best Provisions of that kinde, not only to fail, but to bring their Possessors also, to be worse than nothing.

I had superscribed your *Names* (or hereto added a Catalogue of them:) but, many of you are personally unknown, and, the rest having discovered themselves unto mee, for our mutual comfort and conversation onely (without any desire that notice might be taken by other men of what hath been communicated, and passed between them and mee) I do forbear making your Names publick, for that and other considerable respects. You are my friends by the surest side: For you were not made mine by my industry, merit, solicitation, or in respect of any carnal Relations, but, meerly by GODS Mediation, who inclined your hearts to that voluntary compassion, whereof I had fruit in due season, sufficient to preserve mee, without sordid want or dejection, in that condition wherein I am likely to be continued to fit mee for that service which I have yet to do; and I am confident that he who made you my *Friends*, will so keep you; and make mee thankful to him and you, whilst wee live in this world. Your Acceptation I doubt not of, nor of assistance by your prayers to the end of my *Pilgrimage*: For, though some of us may circumstantially differ in our *Judgements*, wee are one in him and with him, in his *Essential Truth*, and in that love which knits all the *Saints* into one blessed and everlasting *Communion*. I am

Your humble Beadsman,

GEORGE WITHER.

A Triple Paradox,

Wherein are asserted, these particulars, that IMPRISONMENT, *is more safe than* LIBERTY, SLANDER, *more advantageous than* PRAISE; POVERTY, *more profitable than* RICHES.

For an INTRODUCTION, *the* AUTHOR *sings this Expresse to the* WORLD.

A *Partie*, unto thee disdainful WORLD,
I sound; and have to thee this *Paper* hurl'd.
Yet, neither for a *Treaty* or *Compliance*,
But, rather, still, to bid to thee *Defiance*;
For, what thou *wer't*, thou *art*; and I yet am
And will be, whilst I live, to thee the same.
Thou art become the *Mistresse of the Field*;
Hast mee beleaguer'd, summond me to yeeld
My *Fortresse*, and thou so proceedest on,
As if thou wert assur'd, it should be wonne:
But, thereon thou perhaps, mayst yet attend
As long as did th' *Infanta* for *Ostend*;
And as she nothing had at last but Stones,
Get nothing but dead flesh, and rotten bones.
I see thine insolence, and every day
Hear what thy favourites are pleas'd to say,
How they extol thy *Power*, how they debase
My succours, and my helpers would disgrace,

I well observe, thou round begirt mee hast;
That, having all my *Outworks* quite laid waste,
Thou, to compleat a *Conquest*, dost begin
A fierce assault to ruine all *within*.
That, to prevent the sending of supplies, (lies,
Thou frightst my friends with slanders and with
My *Accusers* too, become thou art;
And, justly (I acknowledge) in some part,
But, not in all: for, chiefly, thy *temptations*
Inducements were to those prevarications
Whereby, my Talents were sometime abus'd;
Though therefore, I seem worthily reduc'd
To what I am; thou undeservedly
Hast mee pursued with malignity;
Because the love which I once bore to thee
Was more, than thou deservedst it should be;
Thou most injuriously requited hast
That love, which in my youth on thee I plac'd;
For, though I never totally was thine, (mine,
Thou hadst (when least) more of mee than was
And, him, of his right, to whom all was due
I robbed then, thy service to pursue.
But, he, now gives mee grace, thy wiles to hate,
And to observe them ere it is too late;
That what thou by thy falsehoods dost intend
Shall cross thine own *Designments* in the end.

Thou, having into many errors run mee,
Thought'st by undoing mee, to have undone mee,
But art deceiv'd: for, that which thou hast done
Hath brought mee to the knowledge of that *Stone*,
Which turneth dross to gold, and from offences
Instructs mee to extract those *Quintessences*,
Which will preserve my *Freedome* in all places,
Supply all *Wants*, Convert all my *Disgraces*

To

To honours, and in every estate,
With all things needful, mee accommodate.
The *Devil* by meine aid, hath long time sought
How, he his ends upon mee might have wrought;
But, neither *Thou* nor *Hee*, nor both conjoyn'd,
Had power to bring to pass, what was design'd:
Until the FLESH, my *Dalilah*, you got
To be a third Associate in the Plot.
And then, both to her damnage, and to mine
You, such progression made in your design,
That by deluding her, you soon prevail'd
In that, whereof you otherwise had fail'd;
So, by her *Frailty*, more than by your *Power*,
(I, being in your clutches at this hour)
Am openly exposed (in some sort)
Like *Samson* for a while, to make you sport;
But, stretched your malignity so far,
That your own *Actings*, your own works will mar:
For, though my *Dalilah* your Vassal be,
And you by her means have surprized mee,
Your Cords and Chains will off again be flung,
So that, we shall redeemed be ere long
From our *Captivities*, and in conclusion
Your own contrivements will be your confusion.
When thou pretendedst kindnesses to mee
(And by them, didst intend to ruine mee)
Thou gav'st mee then, one of *Pandora's* Boxes,
Which, I return thee full of *Paradoxes*,
That shall uncharm thy *Witchcrafts*, and destroy
Those *Gins*, which thou against mee dost employ:
For, if thou open it, (as it is fed
Prometheus opened what thee's fabled
To have bestow'd on him) from thence will flow
Those *Truths*, which will thy falsehoods overthrow.

And

And make some who admire them, to contemn
Those *Jaglings* wherewithall thou foolest them:
As likewise all those Bugbear-Tyrannies,
Which thy oppressing-Instruments devise
To fright us from our duties, and adhere
To thy allurements, out of love or fear.
To batter down my petty single *Sconce*,
Thy three great'st *Engines* thou hast raisd at once;
And so surrounded mee within my *Fort*,
That, I have scarce one little Sally-port
Whereby I may have egress to offend
My *Foes*, or to give ingress to a friend.
Thy *Ragged Regiment* of *POVERTY*,
(And they which by *RESTRAINT* of *LIBERTY*,
Commanded are) enclose mee so about
With *double Trenches*, that, here can to nought
For my Releef, admittance now be given,
Except it comes immediately from Heaven:
Moreover, at the *four Winds*, raised high,
Are four *Mounts*, whereupon thy *Batteries* lye
So diligently man'd by Major SLANDER
(An old and well experienced Commander
In such like services) that, several waies
His great Artillery upon mee playes.
At mee perpetually his tongue-shot flyes,
And his whole *Culverings* charg'd full with *Lies*;
Send poysoned Bullets, which I often hear,
Making loud cracks, or whizzing by mine ear.
But, I, at last, shall rout all this *Brigade*,
Quite frustrate those Attempts which thou hast made
And raise again thy *seige*, or do as well
By dying nobly in my *Citadel*,
And, that it will to thee (when batter'd down)
Prove like the House by *Sampson* overthrown.

Then;

Then, thoſe things, plainly will to thee appear,
Which thou at preſent, wilt not ſee nor hear,
And I ſhall be the ſame to thee and thine,
Which thou haſt lately been to mee and mine;
For, then, my *Ghoſt*, arrayed in white ſheets
Shall haunt thy houſes, walk about thy ſtreets,
And fright thee day and night with repetition
Of what is haſting on, for thy perdition,
And will deſcend upon thee at thoſe times
Wherein thou fill'ſt the meaſure of thy Crimes.
Mean while, to comfort others, and prevent
The tediouſneſs of my *Beleaguerement*,
Ile draw a Map, wherein Ile to expreſs
The vanity of thy maliciouſneſs;
That, they who liſt ſhall know how much I ſleight
Thy *Triple-Forces*, and contemn thy ſpight;
And I to thee, their weakneſſes apart
Will ſo declare, that, unleſs blind thou art,
Thou ſhall perceive, I cannot be deſtroy'd
By thoſe whom thou againſt mee haſt imploy'd
Although in one united: for, theſe three
SLANDER, IMPRISONMENT and POVERTY,
To fall upon mee, all at once began
Before, thou didſt repute me for a *Man*;
And though they charge mee all at once agen,
Grown weaker by *old age*, than I was then,
My *Helper* is the ſame; and ſuffring long (ſtrong.
Hath by his Grace, now made my power more
I know thy pride this *Confidence* contemns:
For, *faith* and *hope*, are now thought but the dreams
Of thoſe men, whom thou doſt *Phanaticks* call:
But, whatſoev'r thou thinkſt, proceed I ſhall.
And, if thou't heedſt what follows, thou ſhalt hear
How little, either *thee*, or thine I fear.

With that part of thy *Forces* Ile begin
Which, with the first *Trench* hath now shut me in.
Thou knowst, what *outwardly*, thou hast bereft;
Now, thou shalt know, what is within mee left
But, never shalt attain to apprehend
How fat my hidden store-house doth extend.

Confinement *is more advantageous than* Liberty.

RESTRAINT, which is an Engine, right or wrong,
Made use of, (first, or last, short time or long)
By most Oppressors, hath been oft my lot;
And, at this present, I escape it not:
For, (though not in the ordinary way
It seemeth now inflicted) I might say,
I am imprisoned, and so confin'd
That, I am no way free, except in *mind*.
Of most injoyments I am quite depriv'd
Which from external things may be detriv'd,
Yet thereby not undone; for I possess
My whole essential Freedome nere the lesse.
My toyes are lost, but by their deprivations
I furnish'd am with real consolations, (shows
Which, though they to the world-ward make no
Yeeld sweeter comforts than the things I lose,
And make my hidden Freedomes to be more
Than those the world vouchsafed heretofore:
For, to her *Freedomes*, when respect I gave
I was then onely free to be a slave,
Whereas, this, doth from nothing mee restrain,
Which, to true Liberty, doth appertain.

That,

That, which gives most content to flesh and blood
I finde to be the basest servitude;
And that we nothing have whereof to boast
Till what the world calls *Liberty* is lost.
What *Freedome* want I, save what being had
Makes many *Free-men* slaves, and wise-men mad?
None, have upon themselves, and others, brought
More plagues than they have done, who would be
The freest men: for *Freedoms* mis-imploy'd (thought
Have lately all our Liberties destroy'd;
And, most, whom we much reverence as our bet-
Are but our fellow-slaves in golden fetters. (ters
What *Liberty* had I, whereof to vaunt
By those Infranchisements I seem to want?
I was at Liberty to rowle in dust,
To prosecute my fancies and my lust;
And therein joy'd, when I could walk abroad;
But, now, I finde the *Services* of GOD
Are *perfectst Freedoms*; That, I am debarr'd
Of nothing, which deserveth my regard
And, that the *Liberty* I did possess,
Was not true *Freedome*, but *Licentiousness*;
At which experiment I am arriv'd,
By losing that whereof I am depriv'd.

This (though fore-seen it was) to mee befell
Before I for it was prepared well,
And, I confess, at first it made a change
within mee, and without, that seemed strange:
But, not long after, at the second sight (right;
That, which appear'd the *wrong-side*, prov'd the
And I am well contented therewithall:
For, I could see GODS *Mercies* through the wall;
Discern'd, when inwardly, I turn'd mine eyes,
Much more of Heaven, than when I saw the skies.

And, that, from very little I was barr'd,
Which I have reason greatly to regard.
What can I see abroad, which hath not been
By mee before, almost to loathing seen,
Or, heard not so describ'd, that being shown
It will not seem a thing already known?
Both Changes and Rechanges I have view'd;
Seen *new things* old become, old things renew'd;
Princes petitioning disdainful Grooms (rooms
Great *Kings* dethron'd, and Peasants in their
Laws out-law'd; *Out-Laws* raised to be Judges
Of Laws, Lives, Goods, and of our Privileges,
By Law and Conscience; Loyalty made Treason,
And Treason Loyalty; Non-sense for Reason
Allow'd, and Reason thought irrational:
Yea, *Meteors* I have seen rise, and Stars fall,
Foundations that immoveable appear'd
Thrown down, and Castles in the Air uprear'd.
I have seen *Heads* and *Feet* exchange their places,
Wealth make men poor, and honour bring dis-
Beauties, which ravished beholders eyes (graces;
Wax more deformed than *Anatomies*,
Or, no more lovely to be lookt upon
Than *Rawridge*, Mumble-crust, or *Bloody-bone*,
But, truth to say, they who most lovely be,
Now, no more pleasureful appear to mee
Than *Pictures*, nor so much as ugly faces
Whose hearts are beautifi'd with inward graces,
Although to *Beauty* very few were more
A Servant, than I have been heretofore,
And if that please not, which I once lik'd best
What pleasure is there to behold the rest?
That, at this present, and all other sights
Afford so little which my heart delights,

That,

That, all the earth, and one poor little room
Are so equivalent to mee become,
That I know nothing any other where,
More to be priz'd than my enjoyments here;
And, that which makes mee so indifferent
Nor melancholy is, nor discontent,
Confinement, in a house of strength doth dwell,
A homely, and sometimes a nasty Cell,
In furnitures, and in attendance poor,
A *Cerberus* lies alwaies at the door
Fawning a little, when we entring are
But ever snarls while we continue there:
Yet, I so quickly had found out his diet,
That, I knew either how to keep him quiet,
Or order so my self, that when I please
I can lye down and sleep in LITTLE-EASE;
Enlarge *within*, that which *without* hath bound
Contrive conveniences, where none I found;
And, every whit as much content receive
In what I have not, as in what I have.
I view not here the pleasures of the fields
Or what a Garden, Grove, or Meddow yeelds
Which were of late my daily recreation,
But, I have *Visions* by my contemplation
Which hither, during my Confinement brings
Not onely sights of more essential things
But an assurance of injoyments too,
Whereof I doubted more a while ago.
I could not be at that *Solemnization*
Which honoured my *Soveraigns* Coronation
Nor saw his Royal Train in their late Marches
Through LONDON, under their *Triumphant Arches*
Yet in my solitarinesse, alone,
What they were doing, I did think upon

With what should else be done, that's not done yet,
And, which I wish we may not quite forget,
Nor so long, that there, may at length be lost,
Much real honour, and no little cost;
And which, perhaps, to bring now into mind,
By this expression, I am thus confin'd;
For providence, did neither mee restrain
At this time, nor infuse these thoughts in vain.
Ionick, *Dorick*, and *Corinthians* works,
In which, an *Architectors* cunning lurks
Apart, or inter-wove (with that apply'd
Whereby it may be richly beautifi'd)
I can conceive, as if I saw it made,
And all which paintings thereunto can add.
I know, as well as they who did behold
That costly *Show*, what Silver, Silk and Gold,
Pearls, Diamonds, and precious Rubies, can
Contribute to adorn a horse or man.
I have seen all materials which were thither,
To make up that great triumph, brought together.
Princes and Dukes, and Marquesses and Earls,
Plebeians, Men and Women, Boyes and Girls,
As many thousands as then present were
I did as well imagine to be there
As if I them had seen; and can suppose
Not onely what is acted at such Shows,
But also, more than was at any one
Since first the *Roman* Triumphs were begun,
And fancy by my self such glorious things
As would quite begger Emperors and Kings
To represent them. So, by being there
I had but seen a meaner Show than here
My fancy could have made; and what had I
Been then, I pray, advantaged thereby?

What

What had I gained then, by ſitting long
And paying, to be crowded in a throng?
What great contentment could I have deriv'd
From what Mechanick Artiſts had contriv'd,
Compar'd to that which my imagination
Contriv'd in honour of that Coronation?
At which the Trophies coſt, at moſt, no more
Than would have made ſome needy perſons poor;
I ſeldome took, at any time much pleaſure
In *Shows*, which every vulgar eye can meaſure,
And time and coſt require to make them gay,
Yet in a moment vaniſh quite away,
Behinde them leaving nothing that conduces
To Pious, Moral, or to Civil uſes.
What though I did not ſee the *King* that day?
I did in my *Confinement*, for him pray
As heartily as any perſon there,
And, GOD, perhaps, aſſoon the ſame will hear,
Although my *Tongue* was not then heard amoug
Thoſe Acclamations of the vulgar throng,
Which did ſalute his ear; my ſilent *Voice*
Wing'd with Devotion (though it made no noiſe)
Aſcended Heav'n, and may bring bleſſings down,
Which will conduce to ſetling of his Crown,
If hee unfix it not by miſ-indeavour,
Or, valuing of the *Gift* more than the *Giver*.
I do preſume his duties on that day
He did diſcharge; and (wiſhing others may
Perform their dues to him) do not envy
The glory of that day's Solemnity
To him, for whom 'twas purpoſ'd, nor the ſight
Thereof, to thoſe who took therein delight;
But wiſh'd, both might be perfectly contented
In what was at that preſent repreſented;

And

And hope, nought was to him ascribed then,
Which rather appertains to GOD than *Men*:
For, when to *Herods* eloquent Orations
The people gave blasphemous Acclamations,
And he that honour to himself apply'd,
Whereby, GOD ought to have been glorifi'd,
The Doom, which that offence did on him bring,
Made him a lifeless, and a louzie King.

Of these things my confinement did produce
Some thoughts, which are perhaps of some good use.
I, likewise exercis'd my Meditation,
That day, on other things which have relation
To what was then in act; and mus'd upon
That, which occasion gave of things then done,
On some now past, and upon othersome
Which probably will be in time to come.
I mus'd upon the *Changes*, and the Chances,
The Publick Troubles, and Deliverances
Which I have seen. I seriously did ponder
GODS, and *Mens* actions joyntly and asunder,
Our foolish Projects, his wise Providences,
Both in their Progress, and their Consequences.
I thought both on the *People* and the *King*,
What good or evil possibly might spring
From their deportments towards one another
Now by GODS mercy they are brought together.
On those too, in particular, I thought
Whom, GOD into his power hath lately brought:
How great, erewhile, his wants and sufferings were,
What, his enjoyments at this present are;
And, on some other matters, not a few,
Which these, to my consideration drew,
And which perhaps, that day had been by none
Mus'd on, so much had I not been alone.

More-

Moreover it occasion'd thoughts of that
Which to a Nobler Object doth relate;
Even to that Kingdome, King, and Coronation
That should be thought on with more veneration
Than all the *Monarchs* in their greatest glory,
Who now live, or are memoriz'd in story.
My *Contemplation*, with as much content
As others had, to mee did represent
That *DAY* wherein *CHRIST* through *Jerusalem*
Rode meekly on an *Asse*, whilst after him
The people throng'd, or laqued by his side,
And voluntarily HOSANNA cry'd,
Yet afterward pursuing him with scorns
Cry'd *Crucifie*, and crowned him with Thorns;
And this, mee thought, was so considerable,
That it made all our Pomp seem despicable.
For, then my Muses drew mee by degrees
To meditate on what my soul fore-sees
Concerning them, who, whilst they do pretend
CHRIST's *Kingdome*, do pursue another end;
And that, which for his glory was bestown,
Make use of, for advancement of their own.
Not seldome, likewise, I then thought upon
Those many thousand families undone,
Who sit and weep through want of what that day
Was wastfully and vainly, thrown away,
At such a time, wherein both Man and GOD,
Proceedings lookt for in another mode,
And when, our publick hazards and distress,
Requir'd another way of thankfulness.
Upon that solemn day, (not without wonder)
I saw and heard, the Lightning, rain, and thunder
Wherewith GOD seem'd to answer and out-vy
Our Guns and Fire-works (though I was not nigh).

And ſuch reſemblance had the works of *Art*,
To Nature's, that they could not be apart
Diſtinguiſh'd; but that, to prevent our error,
The laſt was loudeſt, and infuſ'd more terrour.
This, I obſerved well; and furthermore
Took ſpecial heed, that nigh two months before,
And likewiſe ever ſince, from Rainy weather
We were not oft free, one whole day together,
Until that Royal Triumph was begun,
Nor till that moment wherein it was done:
Yet, durſt I not be ſo prophane, to ſay
(As one hath writ) *it dar'd not raine that day.*
Nor at that time, *Flaminian-like*, durſt I
Conjecture by a *Heathniſh Augurie*
What GOD thereby intended: but, with awe
Conſider'd upon what I heard and ſaw:
And I confeſs, the *Lightning*, *Rain* and *Thunder*
At this our *Seed-time*, cauſed mee to ponder
On that, which *Samuel* prayed GOD to ſend
In Harveſt-time, and what that did portend;
Which I conceive to be a Meditation
Not then improper, for my Contemplation.
And, though ſome peradventure may ſuſpect
That theſe expreſſions, may ſome way reflect
On what concerns them, it concerns him more
Whoſe cauſe and honour I prefer before
All earthly things; and can be not afraid,
Who ere ſhall be diſpleaſ'd with what I've ſaid;
For, I was barr'd from ſeeing what is done
By men; that, GODS works might be muſed on.
Such things, although we then much mind them
Should not amidſt our Triumphs be forgot; (not,
And, that, (which then by mee was thought upon)
Much more effectually, perhaps, was done

In

In this condition which I now am in,
Than could in that ſtate, wherein I have been:
Forgot therefore, by others, if it be
It will ſeem no great wonderment to mee;
For, who remember *Joſephs* in their ſports,
Or in the jollities at Princes Courts?
Confinement (which I once a dammage thought)
To mee, hath other priviledges brought.
It manifeſts apparently to mee
Who are my *Kinſmen*, who my *Neighbours* be;
And whether he who paſſeth by mee than
Be *Levite*, *Prieſt*, or a *Samaritan*:
For, Neighbourhood and Kindred, he beſt tryes
That's robbed, wounded, or, impriſon'd lyes.
In *Liberty*, I ſometimes doubted whether
They, who then came to viſit mee, were either
My *Friends* or *Foes*, for, I found other while
They whom I truſted moſt, did moſt beguile.
But, few or none my *Viſitants* now are
Save they, whoſe Viſitations are ſincere;
The *Friends* I got, when I did walk abroad
I gain'd my ſelf; Theſe, are made mine by GOD.
Theſe were acquired without pains or coſt;
Not wonn by merit, nor by ſmall faults loſt.
The firſt, were for proſperity decreed,
The latter, for my help, in time of need,
And ſought my Body out, unknown before
Becauſe, they heard it was diſtreſt, and poor;
Which hath to mee, Confinement ſweeter made,
Than all the Freedomes which I lately had;
And, mee, with that *Communion* of the *Saints*,
Experimentally, it now acquaints,
Which, in this life enjoyed is, by all
Who, in the life to come, injoy it ſhall.

A *Priſon*, cannot dreadful ſeem to mee,
For, there I firſt was taught my *A*, *B*, *C*,
In *Sufferings*: There, when I had ſcarcely paſt
Mine *Nonage*, to be ſchooled I was place't.
And, ſo long as the Providence of GOD,
Was pleaſ'd, that, to inſtruct mee with that *Rod*,
I ſhould continue my abiding there,
Princes, my *Tutors*, and Correctors were.
A *Priſon*, is that *Houſe of Diſcipline*,
Wherein the MARTYRS uſually begin
To be *Probationers*; it is the *Colledge*
Of SAINTS, wherein experimental knowledge
Is firſt acquired by a carnal ſenſe
Of that, which tries their Chriſtian patience.
Priſons, to them, are ſanctified *Temples*,
Wherein, they by their meekneſs and examples
Preach to the world by *Deeds* (a powerful way)
What, many other do but meerly *ſay*.
And, as our *Prelates*, in each *Cathedral*
Have ſeveral places, which they pleaſe to call
More or leſs holy: ſo, there likewiſe be
Impriſonments of differing degree:
The *Outer-ward*, an entertainment gives
Moſt commonly to Murtherers and Theeves,
Or, ſuch like malefactors, who diſpleaſe
The world ſometimes, and interrupt her eaſe,
For which they are confin'd, till their juſt guerdon
They ſhall receive, or bribe her for a pardon;
And whereto ſhe gives all advantages
That may in *Priſons* granted be to theſe.
But, all her *Priſoners* are not confin'd
To Wards, and Receptacles of one kind.
The *Inner-wards*, which do to mee appear
The ſame that *Chancels* unto *Churches* are,

Are

Are not made uſe of (except now and then)
But for moſt holy and *Religious men.*
The deepeſt *Dungeons* be reſerv'd for thoſe
Who dare our *Vices*, or her *Luſts* oppoſe;
Or, things repugnant to our ends profeſs,
(When mov'd thereto by conſcientiouſneſs)
And, whoſoere preſumes to plead their caſes,
As *Innocents*, doth hazard in like places
His own *Reſtraint*; or elſe unto ſuſpects,
Which peradventure may have worſe effects.
Yet, *Freedome* yeelds to none ſo much content,
As theſe enjoy, by ſuch *Impriſonment.*
For, they with inward comforts are delighted,
Whilſt they with outward darkneſs are benighted;
And ſweet *Refreſhments*, in amongſt them come
When they are throng'd up in a naſty Room.
When, they of their familiars are depriv'd,
They are by thoſe, who knew them not, releev'd;
When they from *earthly men*, faſt lockt have been;
Celeſtial Angels have ſometime broke in;
Knockt off their chains; the gates and doors un-
The *Priſon* ſhook; the ſturdy *Jaylor* ſcarr'd (barr'd
And made him (falling down before them too)
Cry, *Men and brethren, ſay, what ſhall we do?*
A *Priſon* is the beſt *retiring Room*
That can be got; the beſt *Muſeolum*
For him, wherein to contemplate, that would
Thoſe Objects without fallacy behold,
Which moſt concern him; or would notions have
Of what hee ought to *do, hope*, or *beleeve*:
For, moſt of thoſe things, which abroad he ſpies,
Either delude his ears, or blind his eyes,
Pervert his *Judgement*, or withdraw his mind
From that, wherein his welfare he might find.

A *Priſon* is a place; which he that can
Make uſe of, as becomes a prudent man,
Findes there, more laſting, and more perfect ſolace
Than in the greateſt earthly Princes Pallace;
And, when he knows what *Priviledges* are
In this condition, will ſcorn all that's there.
In *Priſon*, quickly, underſtand he ſhall
The worſt that can to him, at laſt, befall.
There, he may notice take, how moſt men pother
Themſelves; what plagues they are unto each other.
How, cauſeleſly men terrified are
By thoſe, to whom they dreadful would appear;
And, peradventure, if they patient be
That, they purſued by their *Foes* will ſee,
By which their ſelf deſtruction ſhall be wrought,
And thoſe freed, whom, they into bondage brought.
There, they may learn, that to make black or white,
One hair, or add one ſtraws-breadth to their height
Care nought avails; and in that poor eſtate
To laugh at all the worlds deſpight and hate:
For, over them, no power then left ſhe hath,
Except of proſecuting them to death,
Which them ten thouſand fold will happier make
Than all, that ſhe can either *give* or *take*.
Theſe are ſuch benefits as I enjoy,
By what, now ſeems my *Freedome* to deſtroy.
In *Priſon*, too, this Priviledge I have,
That, *living*, I deſcend into my *Grave*,
And by my *Contemplation* can fore-ſee
What my condition in that place will be.
I ſearch it to the bottome, by that ſpark
Of Light, which ſhineth brighteſt in the dark.
The terrours of that Dungeon I fore-ſtall,
I, (as it were) pre-act my *Funeral*,

And

And in a manner alſo, ſee and hear
What will be ſaid and done, when I am there;
Which are advantages not to be known,
Whilſt in the world I flutter up and down.
In *Priſon* alſo, when leaſt room I have,
And cloſe am kept, I, far beyond the Grave
Do *Proſpects* view; and can ſee pretty well
What may concern men, both in *Heaven* and *Hell*;
Whereof, if here I ſhould my knowledge ſpeak
Them, for Phanatick dreams, the world would
And not beleeve the things I could declare, (take,
Becauſe, ſhe knows that I was never there;
And, therefore, Ile proceed again to ſhow
What, my *Experiments* are here below.
Reſtraint, from mee, hath totally ſhut out
That frivelous, and that offenſive *Rout*,
Which interrupts my *Muſings* with diſcourſe
That's either wholly vain, or ſomewhat worſe:
For, to nought elſe, it for the moſt part tends
But fruitleſs complements, or graceleſs ends;
And, what among us, is at meetings blown,
Wrongs other mens affairs, or elſe our own,
Whereas, our words whilſt here we are together,
Tend to the edifying of each other,
In *Faith* or *Manners*; or elſe, to improve
That *Hope*, that *Meekneſs*, *Conſtancy* and *Love*
Which may enable, patiently to bear
Thoſe Burthens, wherewith we oppreſſed are:
And, when our *Bodies* are aſunder gone,
We never leave each other quite alone;
For, we (ev'n when corporeally apart)
Are preſent, both in *Spirit* and in *Heart*.
Though this *Fraternity* did often minde mee,
Till my *Impriſonment* they could not finde mee,

Nor

Nor did I know their persons. Thou, therefore
Oh *foolish world*, to my content add'st more
By my *Restraint*, than if to mee were given
All carnal Freedomes on this side of Heaven;
And, if this be the great'st harms thou canst do,
Prethee, let every spight thou dost be two.
But, all the comforts which best friends afford,
(As they are men) may prove like *Jonah*'s Gourd
For, as next morning, that, did wither quite
Which GOD did cause to spring up in one night,
So, when the *Sun* burns, or a *sharp wind* blows,
This may as quickly fade, as it arose:
For, Death or Injuries, do every day
Take those mens lives, or, their estates away
Who are most charitable; and, of bread
They may have need, by whom I have been fed.
For, unto all men underneath the Sun
That may betide which doth befall to one.
Not therefore, upon those things which GOD sends,
But, on *himself* alone, my soul depends:
Here, all my confidence, *vain world*, is place't,
Or else I might be ruined at last;
And all my present hopes, as vain would be,
As if I had repos'd my trust in thee.
By this *Restriction*, not a few temptations
Will be repelled; many deviations
Of mine prevented; duties better done;
Things which have been forgot, more thought upon;
It peradventure may prepare mee, too,
For what I'm yet to *suffer* and to *do*,
Much better than that *Freedome* did, or could,
Which, by the *Common Tenure* I did hold:
And who knows, but some corporal mis-hap
I may or did by this Restraint escape,

Which

Which might have elſe befell mee when together
The people throng'd and trod upon each other.
Which, though no more but ſhunning ſo much harm,
As breaking of a *neck*, a *legg*, or *arm*,
Were conſiderable; and ten to one them
Such miſ-adventures daily fall upon
Some perſons unconfin'd, when they leaſt dread
Becauſe, where dangers are, they little heed them.
Scap'd I no more here, than that ſlaviſh load
Of *Complementings*, wherewithall abroad
Men tire themſelves, and others; that, alone
Sufficient were, if well conſider'd on,
To make amends for all the ſufferings
Which my confinement now upon mee brings.
For, as to pay this *life*, I am a debter
To *Nature*, and then hope to have a better,
My *Wants*, *Reſtraints*, and *Poverty* do leſs
Afflict my *Body*, by all that diſtreſs
Now laid upon it, than my ſoul hath been
To *hear* and *ſee*, what I have *heard* and *ſeen*,
Whileſt I had liberty abroad to go;
And hear and ſee, what many *ſay* and *do*:
With what diſſembling *Complements*, *Careſſes*;
Affected *Speeches*, *flattering Addreſſes*,
And falſe *Pretendings*; men of ev'ry ſort
Do cheat, fool, claw, and one another court,
As if they did *Realities* intend
When, in meer *Nullities*, at laſt they end.
How, *Letters*, *Promiſes*, *Vows*, *Declarations*,
Orders, *Oaths*, *Covenants*, and *Proteſtations*
Annihilated are, and turn to ſmoak
Or ſtinks; which rather poiſon us, and choak
Than truly nouriſh; and how they go on
In acting ſtill, ſuch things as they have done

Who are deſtroyed; and yet, nere the leſs,
Dream they purſue the waies of *Happineſs.*
I am, as well pleaſ'd, with my ſad condition,
As others, with what they have in fruition,
And, if deſire a longer life I could,
For nothing elſe the ſame deſire I ſhould,
Except it were that I might live to ſee
What GOD will do, and what their end will be.
Frequent I cannot, with conveniency
(As lately, when I had my Liberty,
I might have done) the *Publick Congregation*;
But, I, upon GOD's *Word*, by meditation,
(To exerciſe my ſelf) may ſet apart
The time they dedicate; and both my heart
And my beſt *Faculties*, employ that day,
In preaching ſomewhat to the world *my way*
Which will advance GOD's glory, and improve
My Brethren in good life, hope, faith, and love;
Or, that prepare, which thereunto may tend,
When *Daies* and *Times*, with mee will have an end:
And, GOD (I know) confines not *Saving Graces*
To ordinary *Means*, *Forms*, *Times*, or *Places*,
Nor is diſpleaſed when his ſervices
Endeavour'd are, without contentiouſneſs,
As we are able, and with upright heart,
Though of our duties we may fail in part.
Some other *Notions*, which in this eſtate
Are apprehended, I might now relate,
Which further may illuſtrate thoſe miſ-haps
That man by an *Impriſonment* eſcapes
But, they are Trifles to what I poſſeſs,
In my conſtrained *Solitari eſs.*
For, though it be not what I might have choſe
(Had I been left unto mine own diſpoſe)

It

It proves much better: And, for that reſpect
What I moſt naturally do affect
I dare not abſolutely to requeſt,
(Much leſs make choice of) but to him that beſt
Knows what's beſt for mee, wholly have reſign'd
Both mine own *ſelf*, and things of ev'ry kind.
'Tis he, who hath aſſign'd this lot, and all
What ere it be, which thereby doth befal;
And, this Reſtraint, not onely makes him dearer
To mee; but alſo, to *him*, draws mee nearer,
So that the more my troubles do increaſe
The nearer unto him is my acceſs.
He, fortifies my confidence in him,
And heartens mee, the *World* thus to contemn,
As boldly as if doubtleſs cauſe there were
For her to fear mee, more than I fear her.
I have my fears, but they are nothing elſe
Save what *Perdues* and *Scouts*, and *Centinels*
Are to an *Army*: they do not diſ-heart
A valiant *Souldier*, though they make him ſtart
At firſt *Alarm*; but cauſe him to prepare
For thoſe aſſaults, which nigh approaching are.
When I am judged, in an undone-caſe,
Becauſe, confin'd, in wants, and in diſtreſs;
When all my outward Comforters are gone,
And, I lye muſing on my bed alone
Of what I knew before, or heard that day;
Of what my *Friends* fear, and my *Foes* do ſay;
What men they are, who ſeem with mee offended,
What is already *done*, and what *intended*;
Sometimes a little ſhuddring doth begin,
As if a panick-fear were breaking in,
Which he marks, e're to mee it doth appear
Forthwith, ſteps down betwixt mee and that fear

Supplies defects, expelleth doubts and sadness,
Repleniſheth my heart with ſober gladneſs,
About mee ſets his *Angels*, watch to keep,
And (as to his beloved) gives mee ſleep.
Theſe things conſidered, *Priſons* and *Reſtraints*
(Which have been long, the portion of the *Saints*)
Are not alone things little to be fear'd,
But alſo many times to be preferr'd
Before thoſe *Liberties*, and all thoſe things
That can be found in Palaces of Kings;
What ere their flatterers are pleaſ'd to ſay,
By fruitleſs hopes, to drive their fears away.
For, more are there endanger'd, more deſtroy'd:
There, many times, is leſs content enjoy'd,
Leſs outward ſafety, and a great deal leſs
Of what conduceth to true happineſs,
Than in a *Priſon*: And who ere well heeds
What, there is done, and what thereon ſucceeds
Will finde cauſe, their condition to bewail
Sometimes, much more, than his that's in a Gaol.
For, errors flowing from *Proſperity*
Indanger more, becauſe unſeen they lye.
Men may by their Afflictions be prepar'd
For whatſoere can follow afterward,
And are oft fitted by a lingring grief,
For future happineſs in death or life:
But, while corrupted by exceſſive Treaſures,
Be fool'd with honours, and bewitch'd with plea-
The cauſe of *ſelf-deſtruction* ſtill they nouriſh; (ſures,
They grew as brutiſh as the beaſts that periſh;
And, daily ſo beſotted, by degrees
That, ſenſe of their *humanity* they leeſe; (ter,
So long dream, they are GOD's (or ſomewhat grea-
Till they are *Devils*, or but little better;

And

And ſuddenly, when they think all goes well,
Sink from ſuppoſed *Happineſs*, to HELL.
Moſt men, (yea very many of the beſt)
Their *Talents*, till they Palm-like down are preſt,
Improve not; nor their Duties truly do
Till by Afflictions they are whipt thereto.
A *Priſon*, was long time the School, wherein
Chaſt *Joſeph* thoſe progreſſions did begin,
Which, him forth from obſcurity did bring
To be the ſecond perſon to a *King*.
Jonas was not obedient to GOD's *Call*
Till he, both by a *Storm*, and by a *Whale*,
Was diſciplin'd: And, if I had a thought
My duties were performed as they ought
In any thing, affirmed it ſhould be
That, thereto my Afflictions fitted mee:
For, ſuch like *Simples*, as I am, require
To make them yeeld forth Oyl, the *Preſs*, or *Fire*,
My *Flinty-nature* gives not out one ſpark
To light my ſelf, or others in the dark,
Till knockt with *Steel*. This knowledg I have gain'd
Of mine own temper, and it is unfain'd,
To be *impriſon'd*, *ſlander'd*, or made *poor*,
Shall therefore, henceforth, frighten mee no more,
Nor make mee, whilſt I live aſham'd of either
Of thoſe three *Lots*, nor of them altogether.
Prieſts, *Prophets*, *Kings* and *Saints*, yea (whilſt abode
He made on earth) the glorious Son of GOD
Was pleaſed to ſubmit to all of them
(But to the latter two in an extream)
And, with ſuch Company, Ile undergo
My ſhare, and think, I'm thereby honour'd too.
To this effect, much more might here be ſaid,
But, this will be ſufficient, if well weigh'd,

Which

Which, I ſuſpect; for, very few men heed,
Or minde, long, what they *hear*, or what they *read*.

SLANDER is more Beneficial than PRAISE.

WHo, can expreſs the pain of being ſtung
With ſuch a *fiery Serpent* as the *TONGUE*?
Or, what can cure it, but his being ey'd,
Whom, once, the *Brazen Serpent* typifi'd?
'Tis far more ſharp than Arrows, Darts or Spears;
Down to the heart, it pierces through the ears;
Not onely wounds, but frighteth alſo more
Than murthring *Canons*, when they loudeſt roar;
Afflicteth us, whilſt here we draw our breath,
And, *Gangreeve-like*, ſo ſpreadeth after death
(Ev'n to poſterity upon our *Names*)
That it deſtroyes the life of *honeſt Fames*.
This fury *SLANDER*, hath been quarter'd long,
In *Rotten-Row*, and *Hart-ſtreet*, at the *Tongue*;
Her *Magazeens* and *Forges* are all there,
The *Shop* at which ſhe vents them, is the *Eare*,
In ev'ry Town and City; and no places
Or perſons, her aſperſions and diſgraces
Can long avoid: For, ev'ry where ſhe ſcatters
That ſhot wherewith the Forts of *Fame* ſhe batters.
So venemous it is, that every touch
Proves mortal, or indangers very much,
And nothing ſhooteth more impoyſoned pellets,
Except it be the flatteries of *Prelates*.
I muſt confeſs, that many years ago
I therewith, have been often wounded ſo

That

That, very well, content I could have been
To lye down, where I might no more be ſeen;
And, my ſtupidity is not, yet, ſuch
As not to feel indignities as much
As any man: But, I have learned how
To change my *Sickneſſes* to *Phyſick*, now:
And when the world intendeth mee a ſhame
By retroverſion to convert the ſame
To that, which from beſpattrings purifies,
And makes mee both her *Blame* and *Praiſe* deſpiſe,
No more diſpleaſ'd, or pleaſed therewithall
Than if a *whibling Cur*, ſhould fawn or bawl.
For, unto thoſe Oppreſſions, heretofore
And now lay'd on mee, whatſoever more
The world ſhall add; though they a while oppreſs,
Will, ſhortly, make them, not alone much leſs
But, alſo none at all; and wheel about
Upon her ſelf, as ſoon as my Turn's out.
Praiſe, is a pleaſing thing, to fleſh and blood,
Yet, often doth it much more harm than good;
Puffs up with Pride, o're-weening and vain glory,
Or, with affection to things tranſitory
Beyond a ſafe *Mean*; and makes men ſuppoſe
Themſelves to be, what ev'ry neighbour knows
They are not; yea, what they themſelves do ſee
They neither are, nor poſſibly can be.
Whereas, to be without a cauſe deſpiſ'd,
Diſpraiſ'd, reproach'd, ſcoft, jeer'd and ſcandaliz'd
An undue ſelf-opinion doth remove,
True Meekneſs and Humility improve;
Brings Conſtancy and Patience to their tryal,
And, at the laſt, to ſuch a *Self-denial*,
As in the cloſe will more contentment give us
Than all, whereof a *Slander* can deprive us.

The

The *flatteries* of his *Lords*, made *Joash* ſtumble;
Reviling ſpeeches, made King *David* humble;
Good men, by *praiſes*, oft, are evil made,
But, by *Reproaches*, harm they never had.
The *World*, which beſt is pleaſ'd with her own (*bables*
For that falſe titulary honour ſcrabbles,
Which is compoſ'd of aiery Attributes,
Or, which opinion only conſtitutes:
And, all her happineſs, dependant ſeems
On vulgar approbations and eſteems,
Which are, indeed, her *Portion*: but, to thoſe,
Who can look both beyond, and through the *Shows*,
That ſuch *Toies* make, nought therein doth appear
To merit their deſire, love, hate or fear:
And, therefore, they reſpect them, (come, or go)
As Reaſon them obliges thereunto,
Or, as things, which (if grace divine be granted)
Indifferently, may be poſſeſt or wanted; (them
Make ſuch uſe as they ſerve to, whilſt they have
And yeeld them, when reſum'd, to thoſe who gave
For, had *external honours* in this place, (them.
Been truly more eſſential than *diſgrace*,
To *happineſs eternal*; CHRIST had waved
The ſcandals of the *Croſs*; we had been ſaved
And ſanctifi'd ſhould be without thoſe troubles,
Scorns and reproaches, which the world now
And may redouble: yea, in vain had he (doubles
A promiſe made, that they ſhould bleſſed be
Who, in his ſufferings do with him partake,
And are reproach'd and ſlander'd for his ſake.
Theſe things conſider'd, I am at full reſt;
Slanders infringe not my chief intereſt.
Good or *Ill words* will mee no more concern
When I am dead, than when I was unborn.

And,

And, whilſt I live, (as is inferr'd before)
They harm a little, and they profit more.
If *Scandals* neither mend nor mar my health,
Increaſe not troubles, nor decreaſe my wealth,
Save in opinion onely; all thoſe loſſes
Are cur'd, if my vote that opinion croſſes.
And (prate who liſt) I will as merry bee
As is a *Pye* upon a Cherry-tree.
Praiſe, or *diſpraiſes*, if ſo be my heart
Aſſures, that neither of them by deſert
To mee belongs; my own *Phanatick brain*
Is cauſe of all, whereof I do complain,
Or take delight in: *praiſe*, *blame*, *bleſs*, or *curſe*,
I am no whit the better, or the worſe
And, all men are as much concern'd as I
In what's then ſpoken, be it *Truth*, or *Lye*.
What, is there to be fear'd in *Slandrous Tales*
Whether, they ſhall be either true or falſe?
A *falſe Report* more miſchieves thoſe who ſpread it,
Than harmeth mee. If it impairs my credit,
I may recover it again ere long,
And alſo peradventure, by that wrong
Improve ſome *Vertue*, or abate ſome *Pride*,
Within my ſelf till that time, uneſpy'd. (ſtones,
Although hard words, give harder knocks than
And crack our *Credits*, yet, they break no *Bones*;
And, if unjuſtly thrown, by ſpightful fingers,
They prove moſt miſchievous unto their flingers.
One fault which *Conſcience* findes, afflicts me more
Than twenty ſlanders, yea than twenty ſcore:
So long as that lies quietly in mee,
I ſhall not care who my *Accuſers* be;
And, when that ſhall accuſe mee (as ſometime
It doth) I ſue out an Appeal to him

Who ſtraight acquits mee; elſe I muſt confeſs
I ſhould as much fear mine own *Righteouſneſs*
As all my *Sins*: for, I eſteem them both
Alike impure, and as a menſtruous cloath.
If I am juſtly blam'd for things miſdone,
Or, for faults wherein I am going on
It doth by bringing on mee ſhame of face,
Repentance bring, and to that ſtate of Grace
From which I falling was; and ſtay the courſe
Which might have drawn mee on, from bad to worſe,
Until, that by habituated ſin,
Endleſs Impenitency had broke in:
Much more, therefore, to theſe I am a debter,
Who ſpeak ill, than to thoſe men who ſpeak better
Than I deſerve: And, though that in their ends
They differ, they may be as uſeful friends
Who ſpeak of mee opprobriouſly, ſometimes,
As they, who praiſe mee, or excuſe my crimes.
For, I have long obſerv'd, that all *Relations*,
Nigh or far off (what ever Obligations
Have nearly joyned them, or whatſoere
Their *Quarrels*, *Bnods*, or *Diſobligements* are)
Be (for the moſt part) either friends or foes,
But, as a proſp'rous, or a croſs wind blows;
Or, as their Inter'ſt 'or Expectancy
May be ſecur'd, or doth at hazzard lye.
The *Love* or *Hatred*, which I finde in them,
Differs but in the *Meaſure*, or the *Time*,
Or, in th' *Occaſions*, which have them inclin'd,
To friendlineſs, or elſe to be unkinde.
They frown or ſmile, they praiſe or they diſgrace,
Deſtroy and ſave, and ſtab, or elſe imbrace,
Ev'n as the fit which comes upon them, takes them,
And either pleaſed, or diſpleaſed makes them.

Such

Such, will their words and deeds be then, to thee,
What ere thou art to them, or they to thee.
As bitter Language, I have heard 'twixt thoſe
That were dear Lovers as 'twixt greateſt Foes;
Yea, and more bitter too, in ſome reſpects
Conſidering their *Cauſes* and *Effects*.
A *Foes* Revilings very ſharp appear,
But, when our *Friends* exaſperated are
With, or *without Cauſe given of offence*,
There is between them greater difference
(Or at the leaſt, but very little leſs)
Than taſted is between the bitterneſs
Of unpeel'd *Wallnut-kernels*, and *ſtrong Gall*,
When with our tongues diſtinguiſh them we ſhall.
Moreover, I have ſometimes alſo ſeen
That, they, who have unto each other been
Moſt miſchievous, ſo reconcil'd together
(Though little vertue hath appear'd in either)
So kind in *words* and *deeds*, for outward ends,
And, ſo ingaged mutually as friends
In their Concernments, as if they had never
At variance been; but, hearty friends for ever.
Which, when I minde, I neither pleaſure have
In *Praiſes*, nor do ſlanders mee bereave
Of much content, from whom ſoe're they come,
So long as I finde *Innocence* at home;
Nor, in my own reſpect at any time,
So griev'd am I, as otherwhile for them
Who have miſ-cenſur'd mee; becauſe I know
From what diſtempers uſually they flow;
And that the ſob'reſt and the wiſeſt men
Have ſome *Deliriums* on them now and then.
Exception, is not alwaies to be took
By what ſhall by a *Friend* or *Foe* be ſpoke:

For, men in paſſion, whether they appear
Pleaſ'd or diſpleaſ'd, ſpeak few things as they are,
Nor alwaies as they think; but, rather ſay
That, which the paſſion bearing then chief ſway
Tranſports them to; although a wound it give
To their own ſouls, which pains them whilſt they live.
But, *Friends* and *Foes*, both *good and ill report*,
And, all terreſtrial things of every ſort,
Will ſhortly have an end (with mee at leaſt.)
The worſt, as well as that whereof the beſt
Eſteem I had, will into *nothing* fly:
My *Slanders*, and my *Slanderers* will dye.
At preſent, therefore them no more I dread
Than if I ſaw they were already dead;
And, that which dead or living, ſhall to mee
Befall, will equally forgotten be.
By living, I, their ſcandals may out-live,
And good proofs of my innocency give.
When I am dead, what ever men ſhall pleaſe
To ſpeak or do, mee no way can diſeaſe:
And, they who after death do men defame,
Or ſhall expoſe their bodies unto ſhame,
Bring that diſhonour which they did intend
To others, on themſelves, at latter end:
Yea, make ſome queſtion and ſuſpect their merits,
Repute them perſons of ignoble ſpirits;
And, what they hoped ſhould confirm their peace
Their terrours and their dangers will increaſe.
Slanders, (though poiſon in themſelves) have been
To mee a precious *Antidote* for ſin,
Preventing, not a few times more than one,
That, wherein elſe perhaps I had miſ-done,
(And, I, thereby, effects like his have found
Who had a *Sickneſs* cured by a *wound*)

Whereas,

Whereas, contrariwiſe, a vain *Applauſe*
Of ſins or follies, are a frequent cauſe.
I well remember, that, when I was young
(And in both kinds an Object of the *Tongue*,
As now I am) I reaped many waies
By *Slanders*, much more profit than by *Praiſe*.
For, *Praiſes* made mee ſometimes over-ween,
And (as if no defects in mee had been)
Neglect the means, that, ſupplements might add
To what, I more in *Show*, than *Subſtance* had.
It, likewiſe, mee to envy did expoſe,
From which great diſadvantages aroſe,
And ſcandals, without cauſe: But, *Grace divine*
Croſſ'd thereby, what the *Devil* did deſign:
For, *Defamation*, ſo ſoon was begun,
That, what it charg'd mee with, was never done.
That, ſin prevented was, and many more
By tending of the *Scandal* forth before
The *Crime* was acted; So, into a *Bleſſing*
A *Curſe* was turn'd, which merits this confeſſing,
And alſo, mee obliges, all my daies,
On all occaſions, to give GOD the praiſe;
For, if, perhaps, it had over-flowed then,
The ſtream had never kept his bounds again.
The ſcoffs and jeers, caſt on mee by the Rimes
Of ſome reputed *Poets* in theſe times
Have been my great advantage: for, th'eſteem
Which in my youthful daies I had of them
Had elſe perhaps, from my ſimplicity
Drawn mee, by their familiarity
To thoſe affected *Vanities* with which
They have infected fools, and claw'd their itch.
Were I but as ambitious of that name
A POET, as they are, and think I am,

It might a little vex mee, when I hear
How often, in their *Pamphlets* mee they jear,
Becauſe, Truth ſeaſonably I convey
To ſuch as need it, in a homely way,
Beſt pleaſing unto thoſe who do not care
To crack hard *ſhells* in which no *kernels* are;
Or for *ſtrong Lines*, in which is little found,
Save an affected phraſe, and empty ſound.
But, I do read them with a ſmiling pitty
To finde them to be wicked, who are witty.
At their *Detractions*, I do not repine;
Their *Poems* I eſteem as they do mine:
Their *Cenſures*, I with ſleighting overpaſs,
Who, like *words* without *ſenſe*, *wit* without *grace*;
And, better am contented, without cauſe
To hear their *miſ-reports*, than their *Applauſe*.
As alſo, that, they ſhould by *Pantaloons*
Admired be, and honour'd by *Buffoons*.
Yea, as *Job* ſaid, ſhould they a *Book* compile
Againſt mee (as they may, and did erewhile)
I would receive it, on my ſhoulders bear it,
And as a Crown, upon my head would wear it.
My fearleſneſs of SLANDERS doth not flow
From Ignorance, which hinders mee to know
How, I am ſcandaliz'd: for it appears
In Print, and I have heard it through both ears.
I daily hear what ignominious lyes
Detraction, to defame mee doth deviſe.
I know, whence they proceed; whereto they tend,
In what likewiſe they poſſibly may end:
And it would ſtagger and affright mee too
Unleſs I knew the worſt, all this could do
For, they, who Idolize the *Prelacy*
Impute to mee no leſs, than *Blaſphemy*,

And

And *Sacriledge*: And, I may well expect
That, when their hopes have taken full effect,
Though they with mee at present, do but dandle,
They then will curse mee with *Bell*, *Book* and *Candle*.
How ever, for their persons I will pray;
For, malice hath not mov'd mee to gain-say
Their *Prelacy*; nor hope to get again
What they usurp, and doth to mee pertain:
But, meerly conscientious ness of that
Which in my place I vow'd to vindicate.
Some, call mee *Traitor* too; but well I wot,
They do not so beleeve, or know mee not.
I never did betray my trust to any
Though I my self have been betray'd by many.
With Traitors I have numbred been for one
And serv'd their ends; yet I my self was none:
For, if like *Absolom* they did pretend
To *Sacrifice*, and had another end
I went on in simplicity of heart,
And did not from my Principles depart,
If they intended, or committed Treason
I wronged not my *Conscience*, or my *Reason*
By ought mis-done, except it were, perchance,
Through *over-sight*, or else through *Ignorance*;
For which, the *Plagues now Epidemical*,
To mee, as unto other men befall.
I never was in any factious Plot,
Nor likely seems it, by what I have got,
That, with them in their Actings I was one
Who thriv'd by those designs they carried on,
Though being subject to the present Law
I now do suffer like *Jack Fletchers* Daw.
But, howsoere, I seem to merit blame
None to the King are truer than I am.

Yet,

Yet, if in *Fame*, we credit may repoſe,
I am deſigned to be one of thoſe
Who ſhall not be vouchſaf'd that *Common grace*
Which at his *Coronation* granted was.
GOD's will be done: Perhaps the King well knows
I need not, what on others he beſtows;
Or, to mee ſingly, will his favour ſhow,
That I his Magnanimity may know;
And, that he will more gracious be to thoſe
Who, him did not maliciouſly oppoſe,
Than they, whom I did ſerve were to their friends,
Becauſe they did not ſerve them to their ends.
But, if *Report* hath not divulg'd a *Lye*,
What, can I loſe, or others get thereby?
My whole eſtate, already is bereft, (left?
And, what will there be found, where's nothing
My life, you'l ſay; Alas! that's little worth
It hath been waſting, ever ſince my birth;
And (when it was at beſt) too poor a thing,
To ſatisfie the *Vengeance* of a King.
It will to moſt men ſeem ridiculous
To hear a *Lion Rampant* kill'd a *Mouſe*,
Or ſee an Eagle ſtoop down from on high,
To truſſe a *Titmouſe*, or a Butterfly.
The dread of ſuch a loſs, will not come neer mee,
For, *Age* will ſhortly kill mee, though he ſpare mee,
And, when there's no conveniency of living,
Life, neither is worth *asking*, or the *giving*.
But GOD's intentions, and the hearts of *Kings*
Are ſuch inſcrutable and hidden things
That, none can ſearch their bottomes; then much
Can they be fathom'd by maliciouſneſs. (leſs
Their waies of working their own pleaſures out
Are many times by wheeling round about,

By

By croſs and counter-actings, and by thoſe
Which ſeem'd their own *Deſignments* to oppoſe.
The faithfull'ſt men, they do expoſe oft-times
To hazzards; or with ſuch as are for crimes
Condemn'd, they number them, or, prove them (by
Deſertions, diſ-reſpects, and *Poverty*,
And, frequently, do fit them for thoſe places,
Wherein they beſt may ſerve them, by diſgraces;
But principally, at thoſe times, wherein
Hypocriſie becomes the *Reigning-ſin*.

More things I might inſert, which have relations
In this kind, to my own prevarications,
And, to th'Improvements, which have oft enſu'd
By *Scandals*, which I then would have eſchew'd.
But, my *Experiments* will work on none,
Who cannot by their own, be wrought upon.
Conſider therefore, all ye, unto whom
This *Writing* by GOD's providence doth come
What, in your ſelves and others you have heeded,
Which hath from *Slanders*, and from Praiſe pro-
And, you ſhall find more by the laſt undone (ceeded,
Than by the former, at leaſt, ten to one.
According to our *Proverb*, the Bell clinketh
Juſt ſo, as in his fancy, the fool thinketh,
And, they, who flattring praiſes love to hear,
Immediately, ſuch to themſelves appear,
As repreſented by their *Paraſite*,
Though no more like than Black-Swans are to (white.
Such *Panegyricks* I have ſometime ſeen
That, hard to be reſolved, it had been,
By him, whoſe judgement you therein ſhould crave,
Whether the *Panegyriſt* were more *knave*
Than he was *Fool*, for whom the ſame was made:
But, of their equal *Impudence* I had

No doubt at all, when wisely I had heeded
What one *gave*, tother *took*, and what *succeeded*.
For, I have oftentimes obserу'd thereby
Good Men deprav'd; *Great Men* to Tyranny
Incouraged: That, which is due to men
By natures Law, at first they seize; and then
Those Attributes, at last, intrude upon
That ought to be ascrib'd to GOD alone.
Which evidences, that, *Immodest Praise*
Is worse than *Slander*, and a ground-work laies,
Whereon a superstructure may be built
To sink the Builders, down to shame and guilt.
SLANDERS, and persecutions of the *Tongue*
A portion likewise is, which doth belong
Unto the *Saints*; and sanctifi'd they are
By him, with whom, an individual share
each must expect; we, do but only sup
At brim, he drunk the bottome of the Cup:
We altogether merited the blame,
He underwent the sorrow and the shame.
False witnesses against him were suborn'd
His Glory was to his dishonour turn'd;
His neareſt friends forsook him, and forswore him;
His foes preferr'd a Murtherer before him;
His Innocency not alone reproaching,
But, likewise most injuriously incroaching
Upon his righteous person, him pursu'd
Till by a shameful death, hee death subdu'd,
And breaking from the grave, to Heav'n ascended,
By Angels to Immortal Life attended;
Where, now inthron'd, he Thrones prepared hath
For all, who follow him in that rough path,
And every slander, scorn, reproach and shame,
He suffr'd here, adds glory to his *Name*.

This,

This is the way, and hath been ever since,
Through which all men must pass, who go from
To that *Eternity*, where shall be worn (hence
The Robes of *honour*, when the Ragges of from
Shall off be thrown. On him I fix mine eyes,
And, that, will mee enable to despise
Terrestrial shame and honour: That, makes all
My troubles, when at greatest, seem but small.
That, makes mee, whilst my *Body* is confin'd
Take pleasure in the freedomes of the *Mind*:
Not dreading present, or ensuing wrongs,
Of wicked hands, or of malicious tongues.
This *Paradox*, it helps mee to maintain,
That, where the Grace of GOD is not in vain
More profit, bitterest reproach affords,
Than all the worlds *Applauses*, and *fair words*.

Poverty is more profitable than Riches.

ANother *Black-Guard* hath beleagur'd mee,
That, seems to be the worst of all the three;
For, therewith, whosoever hath to do,
Still is in danger of these other two,
Imprisonment and *Slander*, who attend
On *Poverty* unto her latter end.
Yet, whatsoever in her self she seem,
She merits not a toral dis-esteem:
For, 'tis an instrument of good, and evil,
Oft-times employ'd against us by the *Devil*,
And, oft by GOD himself, to such effects
As may prevent the mischief he projects,

By tempting to thoſe manifold abuſes
Which *Riches* being miſ-employ'd, produces.
There are two ſorts of *Poverty*, that ſpring
From diffring Roots; effects they likewiſe bring
Both diffring and alike: for, providence
Maugre all humane wit and diligence,
Makes many poor, and all their induſtries
Rendreth ſucceſſeleſs by *Contingencies*,
Which no man can fore-ſee, or wholly ſhun
Who ſhall be thereby outwardly undone.
This *Poverty*, afflicts, at firſt, as much
As any, but, diſparages not ſuch
As bear it well; and though it grieveth many,
(Except by their own fault) deſtroyes not any.
The other ſort, is ſordid, vile, and baſe,
Yet, draws her *Pedigree*, from ſuch a Race,
As doth in *Country*, *City*, and in *Court*
Still bear an extraordinary port:
For, by the Fathers, or the Mothers ſide,
It ſprung from *Prodigality* or *Pride*,
Or, from *Improvidence*, or *Idleneſs*,
And, is indeed, near kin to all *Exceſs*;
Though her *Alliance*, theſe, now ſcorn and wave
Becauſe, that ſhee is ragged and they brave.
Shee, at this preſent time, both againſt mee
And others is employ'd: But, though ſhee be
Made uſe of by the *world*; yet, I well know
The *World it ſelf* abhorrs her as a foe,
And with a ſlaviſh dreadfulneſs doth fear her,
On whatſoere occaſion, ſhee comes near her.
Yet, till this *Bug-bear*, was more known to mee,
I, dreaded her almoſt as much as ſhee,
And, did the beſt I could, to keep her from
That *nearneſs* whereunto ſhee now is come.

For,

For, he that would diſgrace, and bring us to
That *State*, which queſtionleſs might us undo,
Let him but juſtly ſay that wee are *poor*;
And, to deſtroy us, he need ſay no more.
Nor ſhall we thereby ſeem diſgrac'd ſo much
(Though we continue to be very rich)
Of whatſoever crime or crimes, wee ſtand
Convicted by the known *Laws*, of this *Land*.
For, *Wealth* cannot alone our *Pardons* buy
And blot out every former Infamy.
But, in a ſhort time alſo, make us capable
Of *Truſts* or *places* that be honourable;
Yea, though they be thoſe *places* which diſpence
To all the people, *Law* and *Conſcience*;
And marry *Ladies* (neither nor poor, nor painted)
As if our bloods had with no crimes been tainted.
But, to be *poor*, implieth every whit,
As it we had nor *honeſty*, nor *wit*,
And, every thing, which ſince our lives begun,
We, *honeſtly*, nor *prudently* have done,
Shall ſo traduced be, as if that nought
Had ev'r by us, been *well done*, *ſpoke*, or *thought*.
There, where we have been kindly entertain'd,
A civil uſage, hardly ſhall be daign'd.
There, where we have been honour'd in times paſt,
Neighbours and *Kinſmen* will their doors make faſt;
Our old familiars will our perſons ſhun,
Like Rats, our Servants from the houſe will run,
Which then will places be of deſolation,
And few thenceforth approach our habitation,
But, *Serjeants*, *Shreeves*, or *Bayliffs* (beaſts of prey)
That little, which is left, to fetch away:
And when there doth remain nor ſticks nor ſtones,
Dead or alive, they'l take our *Fleſh* and *Bones*.

If

If all I should expreſs, that might be ſaid
In this kind, you would think me ſtill afraid
Of *Poverty*; and, that which I ſhould ſpeak,
In ſome, perhaps would ſuch impreſſions make,
That, they with difficulty would beleeve
What benefits I now thereby receive:
Forbearing therefore, that which I might add,
I'le tell what profits may thereby be had:
That, others (who can think I do not lye)
May be no more afraid thereof than I:
That, alſo, they who thereby grieved are,
May in my Conſolations have a ſhare,
To bear thoſe burthens without diſcontent
Which are now on them, or ſeem imminent:
For, little I will mention which was brought
By *reading*, or by *hearſay* to my thought,
But, that *Philoſophie*, which *Reaſon* teaches,
(*Experience* hath confirm'd, & GOD's *grace*
Unto my heart that, it may ſympathize (preaches)
With their hearts, who the ſame ſhall not deſpiſe:
Which, though expreſt in language rude and plain,
Will, peradventure, to good uſe remain,
When they, who of their *Elegancies* boaſt,
Are, with their *Kickſhaws* in oblivion loſt,
When moſt are alſo, quite forgot, whom they
Now dream, ſhall by their *Poems* live for aye:
And, when, that, which they deſpicable deem
With *wiſe*, and *honeſt men*, ſhall finde eſteem.

In my *Reſtraint*, I therefore, do not whine;
At my *Reproaches*, I do not repine;
Nor murmure at my *leſſes*; nor want ſenſe
Of what is in them, which may give offence.
My *ſeeming-friends*, I muſt confeſs, are fewer;
But, they whom now God gives me, are much truer:

For, these that now I have, I finde more willing
To *give* a pound, than those to pay a shilling.
Yet, some of these are so poor, that, I'm faine
Them, from their free *Donations* to restraine,
Because, that of my *Sufferings* they are grown
More sensible, than they are of their own.
And this, an *evidence* of that doth give,
Which pleaseth better than what I *receive*;
Since it demonstrates, GOD, hath in this *Nation*
A people capable of his *compassion*.

I am not ignorant how much disgrace
Is thrown on *Poverty*, nor in what base
Acccount they are, who, thereby are constrain'd
Meerly, by *Charity*, to be maintain'd:
Nor, am I ought asham'd of that estate
Which most so scorn, and so abominate.
For, without loss of *honour*, men of merit,
This *portion*, very many times inherit.
Great *Consuls*, and renowned *Generals*
(In such an exigent as oft befalls
To very many thousands in this *Nation*)
Have had relief without dis-reputation
By *Common Charity*, and *Ancient Story*
Hath kept memorials of it to their glory.
But, I refer that which I might expresse
(To take his *Blur* off) to another place.

To have *subsistance* by meer *Charity*
Is, to subsist by GOD, immediately,
And, they are wicked, or vain fools, at least,
By whom those *Exhibitions* are disgrace't.
For, very many of GOD's favourites
Have been oft, thereby, from the worlds despights
Preserv'd: yea, to the *World*, it would appear
If she would heed it, that, her *Minions* are

Expos'd

Expos'd to such a *Lot*, and (without shame)
Have been by *Alms* preserved as I am:
And, not in those necessities alone,
Which by mis-accidents are undergone,
Are they releev'd; but, very many be
Thereby likewise upheld, in that degree,
Which much is honour'd; yea ev'n to Excess,
In outward splendor, and vain pompeousness.
For, this way, not alone are Monks and Friers
Maintained, with their Abbots and their Priors;
But, even the great *Prelates*, all their lives,
By *Charities* abused *Donatives*;
And, yet as loftily advance their crest
As if they had been Barons born, at least,
Precedency usurping above those,
By whom, they from obscurity arose.

By most men, *Poverty* is thought so base,
That, they repute it for the great'st disgrace
Which can betide them, by what way soever
It comes; or how soere they shall indeavour
To keep it off; and think it not their least
Dishonour, when enforced to subsist
By *Charity*, although it shall be used
With thankfulness, and in no wise abused:
And, many seek to turn it to my shame
That I now brought to this condition am.
Yet, what's to mee befallen worse or more
Than to *good*, *wise*, and *great men* heretofore?
Renowned *Princes* in preceding ages,
Have sought, and had Supplies and Patronages,
From *Forein Kings* and *States*, in their distresses,
Without reproach: yea, he that now possesses
These three great *Kingdomes* was by indigence
Constrained (not a very long time since)

By

By *Charity*, to be both cloath'd and fed,
To ſlake his hunger with a poor mans bread,
And, to accept it, not alone from thoſe
Who were his *freinds*, but alſo from his foes
(Whoſe gifts were baits, whoſe Table was a ſnare,
And of whom, if he do not well be ware,
More miſchief, and, diſhonour will be done him
Than by the *Poverty* then brought upon him.)
Some other perſons alſo, of great birth, (earth
From place to place have wander'd through the
Maintained by the Charity alone,
Sometime by many, and ſometimes by one:
And other while, have ſeem'd ſo left by all,
That they into great poverty did fall.
Yet ne'retheleſs, whilſt they have Preſervation
Retaine ſtill in the world ſome Reputation.
They are meer fools, or worſe, who do beleeve
That, more diſgrace, than theſe I can receive
From ſuch an *In-come*: for (by what I gather
From thence) it is a *real honour* rather,
That, GOD ſupplieth (as it were) from Heaven,
When earthly *wealth* and *honours* are bereaven.
When *Iſrael* had been Captiv'd ſev'nty year,
He made, even thoſe, by whom inſlav'd they were
Them, from their tedious thraldom to redeem,
When there was none to help or pity them.
It was their honour, that their preſervation
Should be vouchſafed, ſo to admiration,
That *Nations* all, might in all times to come,
By heeding it, conſider well, from whom
They muſt in ſuch like caſes, aid expect;
And, that, though by a long delay'd effect
They ſeem forgot and outward hopes quite paſt,
There will be a *Deliverer* at laſt.

By whom, those wants for which they have been
Shall, to their Honour, certainly be turn'd. (scorn'd
What is it more to my Dis-reputation
That GOD provideth for my preservation
By *Charity*, than 'tis disgrace to those
Who their Estates by *Fire* or *Water* lose,
And thereupon the State vouchsafes a *Breef*,
Whereby to ask, and to receive releef?
Nay, what supply can be so honourable
As that, which from hearts, by hands charitable
Is raised and conferr'd, (unaskt, unsought)
By them, of whom I never heard, or thought?
This way (which without shame I do confess)
GOD hath vouchsaf'd releef in my distress,
To mee, as he to men in like estate,
Hath done in former times, and now of late.
E're while, at *Piedmont* in their persecutions
Our Brethren he reliev'd by contributions;
And, should I think it my disgrace can be
That, he doth for my family and mee
Provide, as for a *Nation*? I beleeve
It blame deserv'd, if so I should conceive.
Though I had ask'd, what without asking came,
None could impute it justly to my blame
All things consider'd: for, a *Publick Score*,
Demonstrates, that this *Nation* owes mee more
Than food and Rayment; and that, in the fine
My *Want*, will more be their disgrace than mine.
My *beggarly condition*, is a Portion
More noble, than *Wealth* gotten by Extortion,
Bribes, projects, and those cheats whereby some be
Advanced to great wealth, and high degree,
Thought honourable: yea Benevolences,
And f rced Loans, which otherwile by Princes
Exacted

Exacted be, much more disgraceful are
Than what my *Benefactors* do confer;
For, at my need, it giveth mee releef,
And to the *Givers*, is no wrong or grief.
I hear that is disgracefully objected
Which by my *Poverty* is now effected:
My house, they say, is desolate become,
And, I confin'd am to a single room;
My wife is of her Dowry quite dispoil'd;
I cannot give the portion of a childe
To Son or Daughter, which a while ago
I offred, and was able to bestow:
And, that, where lately we had good respect
Scoffs, flouts and jeers are added to neglect;
And, though these hardships possibly I may
With patience bear, yet, certainly, say they,
These his *Relations* cannot: yes, they can
And have done ever since the storm began:
For, we fore-saw it, and we did prepare
A stock of Patience, those events to bear.
My *Spouse* is CHRIST's Spouse, by a *Law Divine*,
More his, than she by *Humane-Law* is mine.
Our *Children* (though the world usurps a power
O're them) are likewise, much more his than our;
And, of her scorn, though she an Object makes them
He, neither helpless leaves them, or forsakes them.
He, made this *Globe*, with all that therein is;
All things that are in Heav'n and Earth are his;
We know it, and therefore do not despair
That here on Earth, our loss he will repair,
Or, give us better *Portions*, where, they never
Shall be impaired, but, enjoy'd for ever.
Yea, I am confident, that if it may
But add unto GOD's glory any way,

Or, make for their Advancement in that path
Which, to *Eternity* a tendance hath,
Hee'l either keep them *Virgins* to attend
The LAMB, when he brings *Babel* to an end,
Or, marry them ere long, without my coſt,
And, give them better *Portions* than they loſt,
Or, at the worſt, they ſhall content be made
With (be it more or leſs) what may be had.
This, without wavering, beleeve I do,
And, others will perhaps, beleeve it too,
When they conſider Marriages in Heaven
By GOD himſelf are made, and Portions given,
In *Love* and *Virtue*, without prepoſſeſſing
Of any other *Medium*, but his bleſſing.
Wealth, in it ſelf, is neither good nor bad,
Nor *Poverty*, nor *takes from*, nor doth *add*
To *Happineſs Eſſential*, but, as they
Are ſanctifi'd, and as our games we play:
And, of the two, in that, leaſt danger lies,
Which we moſt ſeek to ſhun, and moſt deſpiſe.
Wealth, makes men waſteful, diſſolute and lazy,
In manners rude, in *Mind* and *Body* crazy;
Makes *bold-men* cowards, *Free-men* doth inſlave;
Many, to loſe themſelves, their wealth to ſave.
It ſo befools them, that, Aſſe-like, ſome bear
Their golden-load, till, meat for worms they are,
Enjoying no more profit by their Treaſure,
Save meerly, an imaginary pleaſure
Whilſt here they live; and, as if hope it gave
It would be uſeful to them in the grave,
They hugg it, hoard it, and do lock it faſt,
(As long as living breath in them doth laſt)
Not ſenſible of any detriment
Which they do thereby cauſe, or might prevent.

And,

And, I beleeve, three Families, for one,
That thereby thrive, by *Riches* are undone,
Through those debauchments whereto they allure,
Till, soul or bodies ruine, they procure.
Contrariwise, despised *Poverty*,
Incites to courage, and to industry,
Breaks thraldoms yoaks; cures often, those diseases
Which *Luxury* ingenders, or increases;
For, 'tis an Antidote against the *Gout*,
And helps to purge all those ill humours out,
That, send men to their graves, by an excess
Either in gluttony, or drunkenness.
Exorbitant desires it doth restrain,
An empty belly makes a witful brain;
A crosseless purse, to him small danger brings
Who bears it; for, *before the Theef hee sings*. (sad,
And, when he dies, that, which makes those men
Who, whilst they liv'd, things in abundance had,
Afflicts not him that's poor; for, he's depriv'd
Of nought, but what oppress him whilst he liv'd.
A very poor man also, scapes their fates,
Who are *belov'd*, or *hang'd* for their *Estates*,
And, some at this time, (I beleeve) will judge
The last of these, to be a *priviledge*.
Though many, not a little do rejoyce
In that rude, loud, and everlasting noise
Which, in most rich mens houses you shall hear,
Where every Room is made a *thorow-fare*;
Or, where, so many *servants* help to do
Their works, as make *one Business*, more than *two*;
Where, for each man who faithfully obeyes him,
The Master feeds another, who betrayes him,
And, thrice as many, who, by night or day
Do steal, perhaps, or spoil, or waste away

More

More (oftentimes) than would the charges bear
Of paying twice their wages, for that year:
Though many like this, 'tis to mee an eaſe
That *Poverty* hath freed mee quite from theſe.
I, now, finde much more joy, than in much pelf,
That, I have learned how to ſerve my ſelf;
To bruſh my Cloak, my garments to unlooſe,
Put on and off, my ſtockings and my ſhooes,
And, that, without my *Servants*, I can be
As well content, as they are without mee;
I know both how to want, and to abound;
And, much more pleaſure, I, in this have found,
Than in choice meats, that in a time of need,
On bread alone, I ſavourly, can feed,
Or, on as ſcanty, and as homely fare
(In my old age) as men that pooreſt are,
Yet, be both more in health, and no leſs able,
Than when GOD gave a fully furniſh'd Table,
With meat ſo well cook't, that it did invite
At every meal, a *double-Appetite*.
And, I, whoſe worſt apparel uſ'd to be
As good as any mans of my degree,
Can in thoſe garments, without ſhame, appear
Which, I, but lately was aſham'd to wear;
Unto which confidence, till want had brought mee,
Philoſophy, that leſſon never taught mee.
I, muſt likewiſe, ingenuouſly confeſs
That, my diſtractions have been ten times leſs
Since I had nothing left, than whil'ſt I had
What, in opinion, mee a *rich man* made:
And, this is gain'd by loſing what is gone,
That, now, 'twixt having *Wealth*, and having *none*,
I know the difference to be ſo ſmall,
That, upon neither of them, dote I ſhall:

For,

For, as much *certainty*, I do perceive
In that *uncertainty*, at which I live
As is in any temporal estate
Of *Goods* or *Lands* (especially of late)
Now, therefore, I desire not to be *Rich*,
Or to be *Poor*, because (not knowing which
Will best advantage mee) I to his pleasure
Have left it, who, knows what *Estate*, and *Measure*
Of *Wealth* and *Poverty*, best fit mee shall
To do that, whereto he vouchsafes a *Call*.
I neither *Wealth* nor *Poverty* will chuse;
Nor, which soere he gives will I refuse.
But, most men would have somewhat of their own,
As if supplies by *Charity* bestown,
Would sooner fail them; yea, although their Father
Well cloaths and feeds them, they desire much rather
To finger their whole *Portion*, that they might
Pursue their own desires, out of his sight.
Some other, altogether do relye
On their own prudence, and self-industry,
And of *Contingencies*, are so afraid
That, thus within themselves their hearts have said;
We possibly, into such wants may fall
And so deserted likewise be of all
By whom we have been harbour'd, cloath'd & fed,
(Some of them being ruin'd, and some dead)
That, unless we can some *Reserve* provide,
Whereby, what e're haps, we may be supply'd,
We may become exceeding miserable;
Especially, if us to dis-enable,
Old Age, *Restraint*, and Sickness should increase,
And, to *Necessities*, add *Helplessness*.
Should this befall (as possibly it may)
Our *Poverty* would be too great, they'l say,

With

With patience to be born: Alas! *poor men*,
I'le grant all this may happen: but, what then?
Did ever you yet know, or see, or hear,
That Lands or goods freed any from this fear?
If not, how can you hope to bring to pass
That, which by no man, yet effected was?
Have you not ſtill a GOD? and, is not hee,
A *Refuge*, though all other failing be?
Your *Truſt* was never plac'd on him alone,
If him, you cannot truſt, when all is gone.
While ſomewhat's left, whereby ſubſiſt we may,
As *David* ſaid, we boaſt of him all day,
But, be aſſur'd, that e're from hence ye go,
He'l make proof, whether it be thus or no.
Him, and our *own Cauſe*, we do much miſtake,
When, 'tis at *beſt*, the ſame at *worſt*, we make.
And, ſo much on his *Gifts* our hearts are ſet,
That, him, who did beſtow them, we forget.
To GOD, *be therefore, praiſe, who by this trial*
Gives mee both *proof* and *means* of *Self-denial*.

I, am as worthleſs as the worſt of you,
I, nothing know, by mine own merits due,
But, that which now I ſuffer, and much worſe,
(The wages of an everlaſting curſe)
My frailties are as great, my ſins as many
As yours; worſe than my ſelf I know not any,
Though ſome ſo ſeem: and, yet, GOD's promiſes
Make way through all theſe diſadvantages,
So well to know *him*, that, I do beleeve
My truſt in him, he never will deceive;
And, that it would for my advantage be
If all that may be fear'd, ſhould fall on mee.
Were that *condition* (as it may be) mine,
I, then, ſhould have no more cauſe to repine

Than

Then any other man, who to the doom
Of *Death* submitteth, when his time is come:
For, he who feels this day nor want nor sorrow,
May be in worse estate than I to morrow.
So long, as I, have any *work* to do,
I shall have what is needfull thereunto.
And when 'tis at an end, no matter whether
The stroke of Death shall be received, either
By Axe or Halter, (so I merit not,
What is by Law the Malefactors Lot.)
Or *starving*, or, by one of those diseases
Which, ordinarily, the body ceizes. (breath
For, that shame, which men fear, whilst they have
By suffring, what they count a shameful death
Is shar'd among mankind, and every one
Bears part thereof with mee, when I am gone.
And, whilst I live, what e're can suffred be,
May fall as well to any, as to mee.
Upon my *death-bed*, or, upon a Rack,
When flesh and bones, and all my sinews crack,
I may be therewithall, as blithe and frolick,
As, when a *burning Feaver*, or, the *Collick*
Age, or *Consumptions*, or the *Pestilence*
Shall be the means to carry mee from hence.
The pains of these, are oftentimes as strong,
They do continue ev'ry whit, as long;
And, at a *Rich mans* door, a *Lazar* dies
Sometimes as easily, as he that lyes
Upon a bed of Down, and who till death
All necessaries in abundance hath.
This, being well observ'd, it may appear
That, we are fooled with false hope, or fear,
When we shall dream to be secured more
From all events, by being *rich*, than poor.

Or, that, there any ſtate on earth can be,
Which may not have the ſame *Cataſtrophe*.
When GOD vouchſafes to make mens *Poverties*
To glorifie him, he doth ſend ſupplies,
Ev'n by unlikely means; and makes that nouriſh
Whereby, they, who are fed with dainties periſh.
Them, on whom *Tyrants* no compaſſion have,
He, in the fiery furnaces can ſave;
When they are caſt into a Lions den,
He maketh beaſts more merciful than men.
He, (when to manifeſt his Power Divine
It pleaſeth him) turns *Water into Wine*,
Which, at a poor mans wedding once was done
More to his honour, than when *Conduits* run
With Sack and Claret; which, magnificence
Adds honour to the marriage of a *Prince*.
He, when men hungring after *Righteouſneſs*
Wait on him in a hungry *Wilderneſs*,
Feeds thouſands with a few loaves, and two fiſhes,
As full, as if they had ten thouſand diſhes.
The bottome of a *Barrel*, and a *Cruſe*
Shall Meal and Oyl ſufficiently produce,
To keep a family in time of *Dearth*,
Until he ſends a *Plenty* upon earth.
He, when the *Creditor*, for payment asks
(With rigor) doth fill many empty Casks,
Out of one pot of Oyle, until there be
A competence, to ſet the *Debter* free,
And, for his livelihood, in time to come.
Yea, by devourers, he doth nouriſh ſome:
For, daily, that *Elias* might be fed
The *Ravens* brought unto him fleſh and bread.
This hath been; and ſome things I can aver
Of this kind, in mine own particular.

Once,

Once, twice, nay, oftner I have been distrest
As, I now am; and three times at the least,
Have had repair vouchsafed mee by GOD,
In such an extraordinary mode,
That, many did admire, at my supply;
As very well they might; for, so did I.
And, when it seasonably may be shown,
The manner of it will perhaps be known.
At, this time, that, which many did suppose
Would mee, ere now, have ruin'd; on my foes
Hath cast a bridle, and will keep mee from
What they intend, until my hour is come;
And, peradventure, then, restrain them too,
From acting all, that they intend to do.
That, which both my *Estate* and *Reputation*
Should have destroyed; is my preservation
Another away; and an advantage brings,
In better and more profitable things.
For, *Slanders*, gain mee credit; that, doth glad mee
Which was intended to deject and sad mee;
That, which pursued, is, to make mee poor
Makes my wants less, and my contentments more.
And, as if GOD had purpos'd to bestow
A *sign* upon mee, plainly to fore-show
That, those Afflictions, and abhorred places,
Which add to others, *torments* and *disgraces*,
Should comfort mee, when *common comforts* fail,
NEWGATE, suppos'd an ignominious *Jaile*
To mee, hath (as it were a *Patroness*)
Contributed releef in my distress,
Perhaps, from some of them, whose pressures were
Either as great, or greater, than, mine are:
Which (as I am obliged) to GOD's praise
I do, and shall acknowledge all my daies

To be an action, which doth ſignifie
A greater *Mercy*, than that bare ſupply;
For, it informs, and well aſſureth mee
A *Priſon*, ſhall no dammage bring to mee,
And, that thoſe places, which, make many poor,
Will make mee richer than I was before.
Theſe things, I thus expreſs, that others may
Perſwaded be, I do not write or ſay
What I have read or heard, or whereof I
Have no more in mee, ſave the *Theory*;
And, knowing, this, which into words I ſpin
Flows forth from what is really, within,
And, by experience learn'd, it might effect
That operation which I do expect.

Moſt men, ſuppoſe them ſigns they are beloved
Of GOD, and all their waies by him approved,
(How negligent ſoe're of his commands)
When outward things do proſper in their hands.
They count them marks of his *eſpecial Grace*
If their Cows caſts not Calf; if he doth bleſs
Their Oxen; if their flocks of Sheep increaſe;
If none doth in their perſons them oppreſs;
If their new-purchaſ'd Titles be made good;
If, by their Trades and Rents, they to their *Brood*
May leave great Portions; if, they may at *Court*
Finde favour: and, if bleſſings of this ſort
Be multiply'd upon them, they ſuppoſe
God is their *Friend*, and foe unto their foes.
Indeed, theſe, bleſſings are; But ſigns to mee
Of GOD's eſpecial Grace, theſe, rather be;
That, when of Land and Goods I am bereſt,
And, no external comfort ſeemeth left,
I can depend on him, and be more glad,
In his love, than in all that e're I had:

That,

That, I am freely justifi'd by him
In that, for which the world doth mee condemn;
That, I perceive, he deigneth mee releef,
By that, which usually augmenteth grief;
And, that, when most inrag'd oppressors are,
Of their displeasure, I am least in fear:
That, things which threaten troubles to prolong;
(Till they are helpless) make my faith more strong,
My fear as little, whilst the *Fight* doth last,
As at the *Triumph*, when all danger's past;
And, that, their waies, who do most malice mee,
Neither the waies of GOD, nor good men be.

These things, are of GOD's *love* a truer sign
Than an increase of Corn, of Oyl and Wine,
And, I do smile to think, how like *poor sowres*
They will e're long, sneak down into their graves,
Who, make false boast of GOD, when they with shame
Shall know, that, by their spight I better'd am. (
And, when my *Country* hears the next Age tell
How, mee they us'd, who always lov'd it well;
What, better men have suffer'd; what, in vain
Was *said*; what *done*, *undone*, and *done again*;
How, *Truth's* bely'd; how *Lies* uphold for *Truth*;
How much the *heart* dissented from the *mouth*;
Their *Deeds* from what they seem to think and say;
And, how, at *fast* and *loose*, we now do play;
It will be thought, perhaps, this *Generation*
Had lost *Faith*, *Reason*, *Justice*, and *Compassion*,
And, they, who shall by strict examination,
Search out the cause of this prevarication
Will finde an hypocritical Devotion
Sprung from the love of *Riches* and *Promotion*,
(Dis-robing Piety of her plain *Dresse*,
To be dis-figur'd with that pompeousness

Which

Which is affected by the *Man of Sin*)
Of all that is amiſs, chief cauſe hath been.
I muſt not ſcribble all that might be pend
Upon this *Subject*, leſt I more offend
Than profit, or, leſt, for want of ſpeed,
Be hindred, in my purpoſe to proceed.
But, one more *Argument*, I'le therefore add
Whereby, it out of queſtion may be made,
That, to be very *Rich*, indangers more
A *real Happineſs*, than to be *poor*;
And, prov'd it ſhall be by a *Demonſtration*,
That, will admit no future confutation.
Becauſe, it ſhews that *Wealth* hath not alone
More hurt to many ſingle perſons done
Than *Poverty*, but, alſo to the Race
Of all *mankind*; and unto GOD's *Free-Grace*
Injurious been; diſhonour brought to CHRIST,
And, ſet up his oppoſers Intereſt.
Obſerve it, for, I, nothing will alledge
But, that, whereof, the meaneſt wit may judge.
I need not tell you, wee more eaſily
May drive a *Camel* through a needles eye,
Or, thread it with a *Cable*, than, to heaven
Rich men aſcend, or thither may be driven.
For, moſt have heard, he ſpake to that effect
Whoſe judgement none have reaſon to ſuſpect;
Yet, I will ſhew to you what way he went,
And how, by his example to prevent
That difficulty; For, he did not ſay,
One thing to us, and walk another way
As many do, and did, who would be thought
To follow him, and teach us what he taught.
In plain expreſſion I will let you ſee
Who, thoſe *Impoſtors* and *Apoſtates* be

Who ſpeak ſometimes his *words*, and do profeſs
His *Truth*, yet are in practice nothing leſs.
CHRIST, knowing well, that, *Avarice*, *Ambition*,
Wealth and *Preferments* ripen to perdition,
And, that, they ſo inſenſibly deprave
The beſt and wiſeſt men, if way they give
To their Allurements; that, although he were
The Son of GOD, and needed not to fear
The frailties of his fleſh, he, to the Law
Conformed, and preſerved it in awe
By true obedience; mortifi'd that nature
Which he aſſumed from the *Humane-creature*,
Both by an unconſtrain'd *Humility*,
And, by a *voluntary Poverty*:
And, did for our example, and our ſake
Forbear, of things indifferent to partake,
Leſt, we, who know not how aright to uſe
Our *Liberty*, things lawful might abuſe
By taking that for *food*, which was provided
For Phyſick rather, when a *Cure* we needed.
When, firſt, from Heav'n he came (though Lord of all
In Heav'n and Earth he was) within a *ſtall*
He took up his firſt *Lodging*; paſſed on
Throughout his *Childe-hood*, as he had begun;
And, to the world, no better did appear
Than Son to *Joſeph*, a poor Carpenter.
When to mans age he came, (for ought we know)
He liv'd by labour, as ſuch poor men do.
And, when he did begin to manifeſt
Himſelf to be *the Saviour* JESUS CHRIST,
His Royalty was furniſh'd out no more
With *Earthly Riches*, than it was before;
He had nor Lands, nor Goods, to finde him bread,
Nor any Houſe, wherein to reſt his head.

He

He had, for what was needful, no supplies
But, pious men and womens Charities.
Poor despicable *Fisher-men* (for such)
And, those, who neither Noble were, nor Rich
He chose for his *Disciples*; and when these
He sent abroad on his Ambassages,
They were forbidden either to take care
Wherewith they might be fed, or what to wear,
Or, mony to provide for their expence,
But, leave those things unto GOD's providence.
To them his Gospel-principles he gave,
And, taught them how themselves they should behave
In their *Discipleship*, both where neglect (have
They found, and also where they had respect.
He them injoyned, to be meek and humble,
And, as the likeli'st block to make them stumble
Warn'd, to *Precedency*, not to aspire,
Or any *Lordly Attributes* desire:
For, his *Disciples* in their low'st condition
Began to be infected with *Ambition*.
The Sons of *Zebede*, when they were poor,
Were tainted therewithall; And, how much more
It doth deprave men when they wealthy grow
CHRIST did fore-see, and we have liv'd to know
By that, wherein the *Prelacy* hath varied
From his Example; and, by him who carried
The *Bag* in his time, we have learned too,
What *Avarice* may make a *Bishop* do.
Moreover, when by publick Acclamation
CHRIST had a visible inauguration
Into that *Kingdome*, whereto he was born,
No rich or Royal Robes by him were worn;
Nor sought he to be honour'd with such things
As are affected by terrestrial Kings,

But, meekly, through *Jerusalem* did pass
Not on a barbed Steed, but, on an Asse,
(Which none had backt before) and which nor Had
Nor saddle, trappings, or a foot-cloth had,
Save what the people on his back had thrown
And, to that purpose taken from their own.
When he was crown'd, no golden *Crown* he wore
Lin'd with soft Fur, but, one much worse than poor:
A *Wreath of Thorns*, he wore upon his head,
He had no better *Scepter* than a *Reed*;
A Purple Robe, was cast on him in scorn,
To be at that sad *Coronation* worn.
For him, there was prepar'd no other *Throne*,
Except a *Cross*, to be advanc'd upon.
Nor *Fun'ral Rites*, nor *Monument*, nor *Grave*
Had he when dead, but, what some lent or gave.
Thus, poorly was his *Kingdome* here begun;
Thus, his *Affairs of State* were carried on.
So long as he a life on earth retaind,
Like no terrestriall *Monarch* here he reign'd;
But, glorifi'd his *Kingdom* in this mode:
And, when that he ascended up to GOD,
Hee, by his *Holy Spirit*, so did minde,
(And so inspire those whom h: left behinde)
To propagate the same, that they pursu'd
The Discipline and *Patterne* he had shew'd.
From SATANS *Kingdoms*, to distinguish it,
He added whatsoever did befit
A Righteous *Government*, in every thing
Which might advance the Throne of such a King.
Without those *Baubles* which do more oppress
Their *Subjects*, than promote the *Common Peace*.
To this end, and preserve with purity
The *Church* and *Saints* in their integrity,

They left behinde them precepts, counsels, cautions,
And, many (not ambiguous) declarations
Both to inform us of the mind of CHRIST,
And, of the wiles of that great *Antichrist*
Which was to come, and should foundations lay
To set a *Kingdome* up, *another way*,
That might (if possible) be thought to be
CHRIST's *Kingdome*, as now thousands live to see
The world reputes what they erected have,
And, with her Ornaments, made rich and brave.
Moreover, that CHRIST's *Vineyard* and *Cornfield*,
Might fruits both nourishing and pleasant yeeld,
No needful diligence, at first was wanting
In digging, dressing, sowing, or in planting,
Or, so to beautifie it, that none might
Despise it, or not therein take delight.
And, that, none should by Pride, or Avarice
Intrude upon their *Brethrens* Legacies,
They, truly, his *Last Testament* recorded;
The same into a *Gospel-Law* they worded,
Which hath sufficiency, without additions
By *humane policies*, or new Traditions,
To constitute his *Kingdome*, and prevent
Prevarications by mis-government.
To bar out *Innovations*, they by *Deed*
Confirmed, what they had in *words* decreed.
From no true principles of Faith they swerved,
Devotions reverence they well preserved,
Without new-fangles, and those trincketings
That *Superstition* to adorn it brings.
The *Sacrament* (by which the death of *Christ*
Should be remembred) they made not the *Test*
Of things, no way relating to that end
For which, that *Mystery* he did intend;

And,

And, render, what should be by his intention
The *Band of Love*, a means to breed *dissention*:
Nor was the *Bread* or *Wine* then Idoliz'd;
But, that *Love-feast* was duly solemniz'd,
In decency, without vain pomp of State,
Altars, Court-cubbord like, beset with *Plate*,
Wax-lights at noon, in *Silver-Candlesticks*,
Or, any other of these needless tricks
Which were first introduced in those daies
When *Wooden-Priests*, got silver *Chalices*.
They us'd no superfluous Adorations,
Cringings, ridiculous gesticulations,
Or mimick Actions; nor these or those, *postures*
Of *Body*, neither *places*, *times*, or *vestures*,
Were so essential made, or necessary
To *holy Duties*, that, none ought to vary
From those *Formalities*: nor, *painted walls*,
Nor *Pictures* had they, *Surplices*, nor *Palls*,
Chimers, *hoods*, *Rochets*, nor rich *Copes*, nor *Tippets*,
Nor was their *Service* cut out into sippets,
For, such toyes (then unknown) did not begin
Till *Anichrist* arose and brought them in,
And, till with *Wealth* and *Dignities* inricht
The *Presbyters*, and *Bishops* were bewitcht.
To have prevented this (as I have said)
A good *Foundation* CHRIST himself had laid,
And, at the first, that *Structure* was begun,
Which he intended should be built thereon.
Such as were then, by sacred Ordination,
Call'd *Bishops*, watchful were, and took occasion
From ev'ry slip, to travel, preach, and write,
That errours and mis-deeds prevent they might.
As soon as *Demas* and *Diotrephes*,
With such like, were observed in their daies

To innovate, and labour to bring in
That *Pretty* which, afterward crept in,
They so oppos'd it, that, till from his chain
The Devil (then comm'd) was loose again,
None could set up the *Mystery* begun,
Though many were then working thereupon;
For, CHRIST's *Apostles*, and their true successors
(In spight of *Innovators*, of *Oppressors*
And *Heretickes*) by that simplicity
Of *Truth*, which was profest in *Poverty*,
Did so distinguish it, from what by those
Advanc'd would be, when *Antichrist* arose,
That, they inviolate maintaind thereby
Her honour, and her native purity,
Without that carnal Pomps and costly Pride
With which the STRUMPET now seems glorifi'd.
And wherewith, shee hath half the world inchanted,
Since *Heathenish Deities* were first supplanted.
That *Miracle* was wrought by GOD through
Whose *Poverty* the world did then contemn, (them
Ev'n when their *Worshippers* were in full power
And, when strag'd at height, sought to devour
Their scorn'd *Opposers*, they withall that odds
Were not then able to support their Gods.
But, when the *Saints* were as distrest and poor,
As they, who seek their bread from door to door,
When they broke through a tenfold *persecution*,
To put their *Masters* will in execution:
When in despised habits through each *Nation*
They preach the blessed means of our salvation;
Were counted *Fools*, and as much dis-esteem'd
As any who are now *Phanaticks* deem'd;
When they had neither *Academick Halls*,
Schools, *Colledges*, or sumptuous *Cathedrals*,

Nor

Not *Universities*, nor *Deans*, nor *Doctors*,
Prebends, *Archdeacons*, *Chancellours* or *Proctors*,
Nor *Rents*, nor *Tythes*, nor *Pensions*, nor *Oblations*,
Excepting onely good mens *free-donations*:
When they, nor *Bishops* had, nor *Presbyters*,
Save, such as *holy Scripture* characters,
(Who claimed no *Precedence* or *Submission*
From those authoriz'd by the same *Commission*;
When they were meek and lowly, in their places,
Poor in their *Temporalities*, and rich in *Graces*;
When they (as necessary to salvation)
On no man did impose an Observation
Of *daies*, *times*, *forms*, or *Ceremonious Rite*,
But, as to edifying, tend it might;
And, left them to be practis'd, or omitted,
As, either they might, or might not be fitted
To *holy Duties*, without just offences,
To other mens, or their own consciences:
(In which *case*, none that hath Sobriety,
Will bar another of his *Liberty*.)
When *Pastors* medled not at all, or little,
With *Soveraigns*, whether *they themselves*, or *Title*
Were *good* or *bad*; excepting in those cases
Which did concern the duties of their places;
But, in the fear of GOD, obedient were
To that *Power* which did visibly appear
Impowered to protect them (whilst it stood
With that obedience, which they owe to GOD;
And, did by suffring render satisfaction,
For what they dared not perform in action.)
When *Emperours* nor *Kings* did them esteem,
Nor *flatter'd* were, or *fawn'd* upon, by them;
Ev'n then by these, mens *Doctrines* and *Examples*,
Were all the *Gentiles* great and glorious *Temples*

Through-

Throughout the world destroy'd: their *Superstitions*
(From which *New Rome* retrived her *Traditions*
Were then by those expell'd: Their *Oracles*
Then silent were; Their jugling *Miracles*
Were prov'd *Impostures*: Then, the *Sophistries*
Of those whom former ages thought most wise,
Were found but fallacies; their *wisdome* folly,
Unsound their *Manners*, their *beleef* unholy;
Their books of *Curious Arts*, whereby great fame
They had acquir'd, were cast into the flame;
And, then, their *Flamins*, and *Archflamins* too,
(Who domineered as the Prelates do)
Were (as these in the time appointed shall)
Brought to those *dooms*, which on *Impostors* fall.
The *Worship* also, wherewithall the *Jews*,
The *worlds* credulity sought to abuse,
As well as her *Philosophy* was foil'd
At their own *weapons*; of that glory spoil'd
Whereof they boasted, and all this was done,
Without the *Outward Pomp* now doted on.
And, if the *Prelates* can with all the glory,
Which they have gotten by things Transitory,
And, by the help of all the Kings on earth,
To such another *Miracle* give birth,
Ile think, that they as great Impostors are,
As *Jannes*, and as *Jambres* long since, were:
Yet, still beleeve, that, maugre all their power,
The *Rods* of these, will their *charm'd Rods* devour.
That, which the *Prelates* take to be a *sign*
Of *Sanctity*, the most becoming *shrine*
Of sacred *Piety*, and true *Devotion*,
I mean, that *Pomp*, whereby (for self promotion)
They seek to trim and paint it, forth hath brought
(Compar'd to this) not any thing worth ought

But

But meer contempt: for, by the zeal of those,
Who, made such poor, and despicable shows,
More honour to the *Church* of *Christ* is done,
Than all their *wealth* and *honours* have thereon
Conferr'd, in more than fifteen hundred years
By all their great and potent *Favourers*.
They, whom the *Churches Poverty* brought forth,
Though *poor externally*, had *inward worth*;
Good life was practis'd, sacred *Trust* profest
Religion with sincerity imbrac't,
In her poor *Dress*, by many an *humble Saint*,
Without the ficus of a *Whorish paint*;
And, till men leaving their plain sober way,
Sought by external *wealth*, to make her gay,
The *Church* in Piety did still increase
Though outward *persecutions* did not cease.
But, what hath followed since her *Poverties*,
Are chang'd for temporal *wealth* and *dignities*?
Since *Princely Prelates* sought for carnal things,
Had learn'd to flatter *Emperours* and *Kings*,
And, cheat them with a *seeming Loyalty*,
Made credible by *fained Piety*?
Since they, an *Ambidexters* part could play,
Had got *two Masters*, and a *double pay*,
Topt *wreathes Imperial* with a *Triple crown*,
Made *Rebels* Martyrs, trod *Allegiance* down
And, had on so much *wealth* and *honour* ceas'd,
That they could turn the *skale* which way they pleas'd
What, hath er'e since that time proceeded thence
But, products of Destructive consequence?
And those *Confusions*, for which (without shame)
Some, to the *Saints* of GOD, impute the blame,
As heretofore those *Heathen Tyrants* did
To them, whose blood they innocently shed?

And,

And, though that in their *publick Acclamations*,
(As alſo, in their private exultations)
The *Prelates* to a joy tranſported ſeem,
Like (as they ſay themſelves) men in a dream,
To ſee that *Wealth* and *Pomp* reſtor'd again,
Whereof ſmall hope they did erewhile retain;
Though of a golden *Hierarchie* dreaming,
They (ſtill the *Poverty* of CHRIST blaſpheming)
Do think the *Angels* are as glad as they
Of that, wherein they triumph at this day,
And, ſay (which I conceive to be a lye)
That, they, could well content have been to dye,
The next day after they reſtor'd had been
To that condition which they now are in;
Yet, I beleeve, it will not, in the cloſe,
Make them ſo happy, as they now ſuppoſe;
Or, give much cauſe unto this *Generation*,
To be well pleaſed in their reſtauration.

For, to theſe *Nations*, or unto our *King*,
What, can I think, theſe *golden Calves* will bring
Save, at the laſt, what followed upon that,
Which *Jeroboams* policy of State
Produc'd in *Iſr'el*, when he (as it were
In ſpight of GOD) ſet *golden Calves* up there?
And, his *Succeſſors* walkt on in that way,
VVhat er'e thoſe *Prophets*, from thenceforth, could (ſay
VVhom GOD, in *Juſtice*, or in *Mercy* ſent
Their threatned *deſolation* to prevent?
VVhat, is more likely, if th' *abominations*
Of almoſt ev'ry Good-man, in theſe *Nations*
Shall be indulg'd, (although it never ſince
It firſt begun, produc'd ought but offence?)
Since *Obſervation* daily finds it plain,
That, *fear of loſſes*, or the *hope of gain*,

Or,

Or, of *Promotion* will root out apace
The ſeeds and plants, of *Piety* and *Grace*?
And, ſince, already it ſo multiplies
Apoſtates, and augments *Hypocriſies*,
What can be thought, but, that, thoſe daies, we ſee
Wherein, th' *Elect* ſhall hardly ſaved be,
Unleſs GOD ſhorten them? for, whatſoere
Men *ſay*, or *do*, they fall into a *ſnare*;
And, thoſe *Deceivers*, whereof laſt I ſpoke,
To blinde mens eyes, have raiſed ſuch a ſmoak,
That, few know which way ſafely turn they may;
Or, what to *think*, *believe*, *hope*, *do*, or *ſay*.
Such *Hiſtories*, as are approv'd by thoſe,
Who never did the *Prelacy* oppoſe,
Affirm, that when the *Churches* Augmentation
Of *wealth* and *honour*, by the free donation
Of *Conſtantine*, was firſt on them conferr'd,
A *voice*, was in the Air diſtinctly heard,
Which did theſe words, articulately ſay,
Into the Church is poiſon pour'd this day:
And, thereupon, that, quickly did enſue,
Which, manifeſts the *Saying* to be true:
For, they, who read Hiſtorical Relations,
Of what hath been in former Generations,
(As alſo, in their times) diſcreetly heeding
What, their *Experience* addeth to their *reading*,
Will finde, that, here, and, almoſt ev'ry where,
The *Prelates* cauſe of many miſchieves were;
Yea, that the greateſt troubles on the earth,
Sprung indirectly, or directly forth,
From their *Ambition*, *Avarice* and *Pride*,
When *Gold* and *Silver* they had multipli'd.
How many troubles, have been here of late,
Occaſion'd by what they did innovate?

How many thousand *Families* undone
In these three *Kingdomes* are, since they begun,
Those *Whimzies*, which the prime occasion were
Of all the *Civil Wars* and discords here?
And, what more will ensue, GOD only knows,
For, wee, already see ill boding shows.
Their *Avarice*, and matchless greedinesse,
Of hoarding Treasure up, to an excess
At such a time as this, wherein the *State*
Is straitned, (and when much it doth abate
That, *Trading*, whereby, our necessities
Publick, and Private, should have their supplies)
Produceth ill effects; and how by these
Both in their *Civil Peace*, and *Conscience*,
Men may disturbed be, there's cause of fear,
By what in their *deportements* doth appear.
And, I observ'd this (which I'le now record)
That, when they first begun to be restor'd,
With them return'd (God grant there come no
May-poles, *Maid-marian*, & the *hobby-horse*, (worse)
Beside, some other heathenish *Prophanations*,
Maugre the *Kings* late pious Proclamations.
It would fill many volumes to collect
What *Prelacy* did heretofore effect;
How troublesome in other *Common-weals*,
And *Kingdomes*, it hath to GOD's *Israels*,
And, other people been: how oft have they
Endeavoured their *Soveraigns* to betray,
Unto the See of *Rome*? how oft, to bring
The *People* into bondage to their *King*,
That, when their purpose they had wrought on him
Both *King* and *people*, might be slaves to them?
How insolent and impudent a power,
Was then usurped when an *Emperour*

Did

Did hold the Stirrup? when an English king
They to so great a slavery did bring,
(And foolery to boot) as to decline
His *Royal Person* at *Tom Beckets* shrine?
Do pennance there; and be so much befoold,
That, school-boy like, he was with Rods there
By *Canterbury* Monks? when, he, that trod (school'd,
Upon his *Leige Lords neck* (blaspheming GOD)
That piece of scripture, to himself applide
Which could in none, but CHRIST, be verifide?
Intolerable was his arrogance,
But, such are oft effects of their advance;
And, this, have *Kings* and *Emperors* been rewarded,
Who, their lean Gammons, had with fat inlarded.
These, are the blessed and the holy fruits,
Of their great *wealth*, and *Lordly Attributes*;
Yet, these are not the worst, for *Kings* and *Princes*,
Were not alone by *Prelates* insolencies,
Abus'd like other men, in what relates
Unto their lives, their honours and estates;
But, GOD is also, thrust out of his *Throne*:
Ev'n his *Peculiars* are usurp'd upon;
And, such Intrusions are now made, by these
Upon mens *Faiths*, and on their *Consciences*,
That, they make many *Proselites* for the *Devil*,
Expose them to an everlasting evil,
And, causes are of mischiefs and offence,
Which all the world can never recompence:
For, *Bonds* they lay, where GOD doth none impose;
Unbinde, from what he never will *unloose*,
And, whatsoere he speaks, his *words* by these,
Are made to mean, what ever they shall please.
But, let the *Saints* in patience persevere;
For, though these arrogantly domineer,

And in their hopes grow every day more ſtrong,
Their time of ſtanding, will not now be long:
The Kings, who with the *Cup of Fornications*
Have been made *Drunk*, for many Generations,
Will at the laſt grow *ſober*, or elſe *mad*,
To ſee what power on them theſe *Juglers* had,
And, help to bring that fatal *Judgement* on,
Which muſt reward them for what they have done.
Great *Babylon* it ſelf, will ſhortly fall,
And, they ſhall have their *Portion* therewithall.
To do us harm, they had not been ſo able,
If in thoſe *Principles*, men had been ſtable
Which conſtitute CHRIST's *Church*, nor to aſſiſt
As they have done, the Throne of Antichriſt.
Had theſe been ſtill content to ſeek no more
(As *Biſhops* were in ages heretofore)
Than might ſupply things needful in their place,
For *Nature* to promote the works of *Grace*,
(Not ſtretching their *Precedency* ought further,
Than did conduce to *Decency*, and *Order*)
It had not ſuch ill conſequents produc'd
And, could they but, yet, timely be reduc'd,
To that *Bound*, *Diſcords* would ere long be ended,
And, much, that is amiſs would be amended.
(GOD *Bleſs the* King, *and open ſo his eyes,*
That he may ſee in what his ſafetie lies
And proſper mee, as I deſire hee may
Walke and continue in that bleſſed way;
Which truly to his glory doth redound,
Whom he ſo kind, and merciful hath found.
My prayers are, that GOD *would make him ſtrong*
Againſt the Charms *of every gloſing Tongue,*
In Grace *and* Vertues, *daily ſo improve him,*
That, GOD *and* Men, *for ever more may love him:*

And,

And, that, I may finde favour in his ſight,
According as I am in heart, upright;
For, whatſoever, hee ſhall bee to mee;
To him, I'm true, and ſo will ever be.
GOD pardon all that I have done amiſs,
And, ſo, I finiſh this *Parentheſis.*)

Here, I have ſhown you, by plain *demonſtration*,
Which (as I ſaid) admits no confutation,
That *Poverty* (though much deſpiſ'd) is better
Than *Riches*; and, that I thereto am debter
Much more, for what concerns my happineſs,
Than, by what can be got by an exceſs
In *Wealth* and *Honour*: And, what's here rehearſt,
Will bee approv'd, when *Synods* have reverſt
Their *Votes*, and be by *Wiſeſt men* upheld
VVhen *Acts of Parliament* ſhall be repeal'd,
That, were confirm'd, by *Commons*, *Lords* & *King*,
VVhen, GOD, ſhall to effect, his purpoſe bring,
And, thoſe men to their *wits*, who little heeded,
VVhat, would enſue that, wherein they proceeded.
Now I have done. If this you can beleeve,
And, GOD, his bleſſing thereunto ſhall give,
I have what, I deſired for my paine;
And, what's here *writ*, ſhall not be writ in vain:
for, all that's in my *words*, is in my *heart*,
In every circumſtance, and every part.
Perhaps, this deſpicable *Barly-cake*,
May tumble, till a fatal breach it make
Into the Tents of *Midian*: but, thereon
VVhat ere elſe follows, let GOD's will be done.
Though no man living, ſhould the ſame regard,
A *good work*, to it ſelf gives full reward,
And, there is nothing, that can make it leſs,
Than what it is, or, bar it from increaſe:

For,

For, though such *Accidents*, may oft befall
As, that, it will not so appear to all,
Nor *Poverty*, *Imprisonment*, *Disgrace*,
Life, *death*, *good*, *bad condition*, *time* nor *place*,
Praises, *Privations*, nor ought that hath name,
Makes *real Vertue*, not to be the same.

Glory be to GOD.

A Word *on the behalf of Mr.* Zachary Crofton *Prisoner in the Tower.*

Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye the same unto them; for this is the Law and the Prophets, Matth. 7. 12.

SInce all men erre, and one way, or another,
Occasion what mis-happens to each other,
I cannot but be sensible of that,
Which may bee mine, and every mans estate.
CROFTON's a Prisoner, and, some say, must dye;
Yet, I, from none, can learn the reason why.
If his declaring for the COVENANT,
Be all his *Crime*, a reason I shall want,
To satisfie me, by what *Law* wee shall
Conclude that his *Offence* is Capital;
Or, how, that can imputed be for *sin*,
Which, by no *Law*, hath yet forbidden been.
GOD, bless the *King* and *State*; and so mens reason
Preserve, that, we may once know *Truth* from *Treason*;
Lest we at last be brought into a snare;
And, be uncertain, when we Traitors are:
For, though it safely might bee justifi'd
That, rather than GOD, *Men* should be obey'd;
Such, may not be their own *Friends*, who condemn
That man, who pleaded both for GOD, and *them*;
And, to the hazzard of his life persists,
In vindicating their Joynt-Interests,
To no mans disadvantage, except those,
Who, are to GOD and *Men*, apparent foes.
Mee thinks, it is great pity, that, a man
Who, to GOD, *King* and *Church*, both may, and *can*
Be serviceable; and, who doth profess
His *Judgement*, in meer conscientiousness.

Without

Without design'd contempt, unto the *State*,
Or, purposing a mutinous debate,
And, never gave just cause to be suspected,
He was to either of them disaffected,
(But, unto both of them, good service did,
When they of *Faithful Servants* had most need;
And, hath but done his duty, to oppose
Those *Harpies*, which to all *Good men* are foes)
Should by mistake, or, by mis-information,
As one, who had deserved no compassion,
A *Sufferer* with *Malefactors* be
Because, hee sees not, what he cannot see;
Or, else, because he cannot credit give
To what, he findes no reason to beleeve;
For, who will care for life, where *Prelacy*
Attains to such a height of *Tyranny*,
That, it inslaves both *Soul* and *Body* too?
And, where, of what we should *beleeve* and *do*,
No certainty, can by their LIGHT be known,
Nor leave obtain'd, to make use of our own,
Though voluntarily the King; ingag'd
To let the *Conscience* be so privileg'd,
And, *Mercy*, in some other things, did show
Whereof, the *Prelacy* will not allow.

Whether the COVENANT, by *right*, or *wrong*,
Were *made*, or *burnt*, it doth not now belong
To private men to question: For, when dooms
Are past in *Parliament*, the *Case* then comes
Before GOD's *Judgement-Seat*; and, woe to them,
Who, that, which hee approves of, shall condemn.
Till, therefore, he, thence answers their *appeal*
Wise men, their private thinkings will conceal,
And, him implore, to whom referr'd it is,
To *right* what's wrong, and pardon what's amiss.

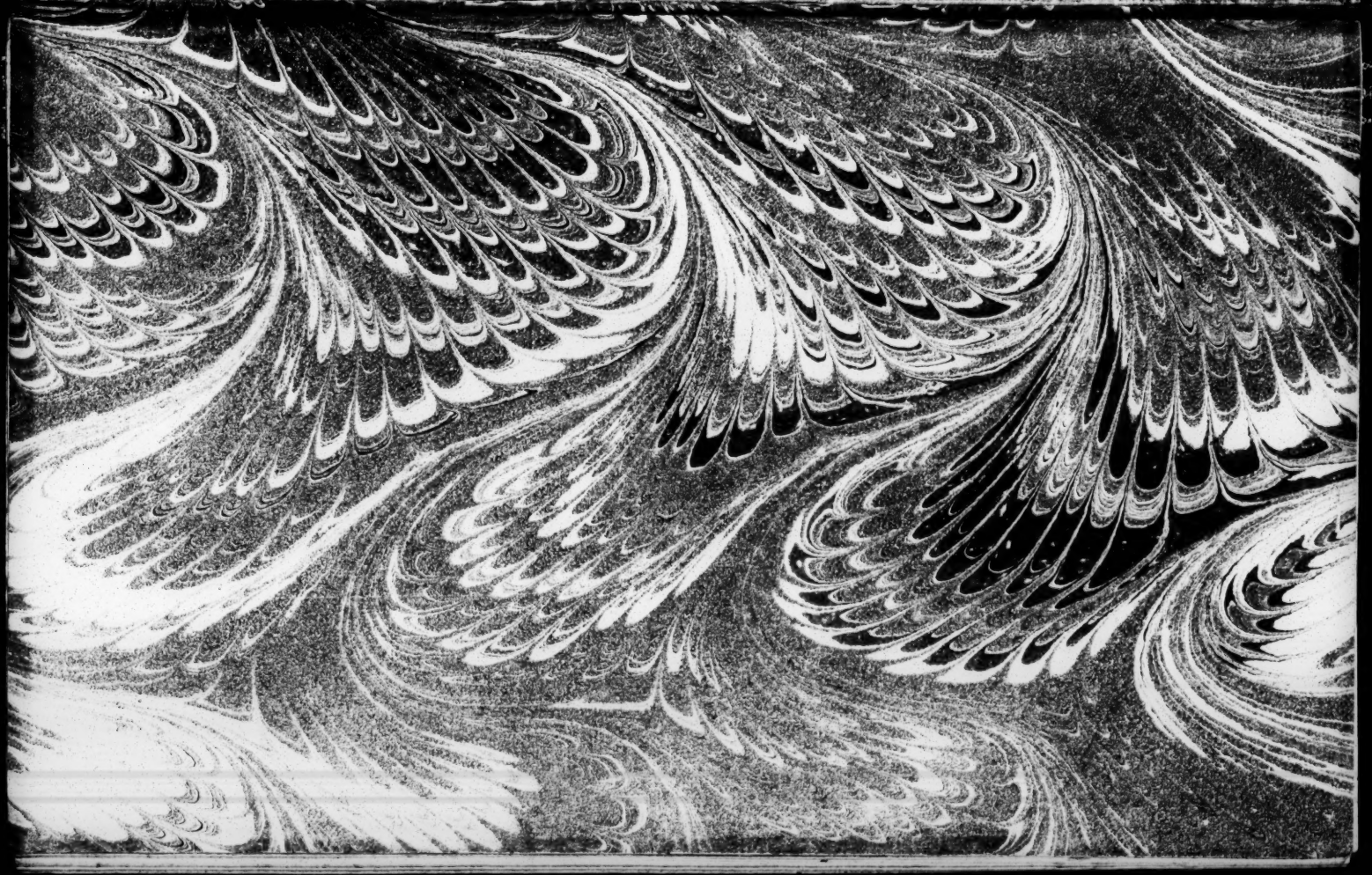
What, *Fame* reports by *Crofton* to be done
I, singly and sincerely musing on,
Do finde, by that; whereof inform'd I am,
That, hee more merited *reward* than *blame*,
Unless, that, wherein other men have err'd
(Without his fault) may be to him transferr'd.
The *Covenant* hee took, but did not *make* it;
Nor forced any one to *take*, or break it;

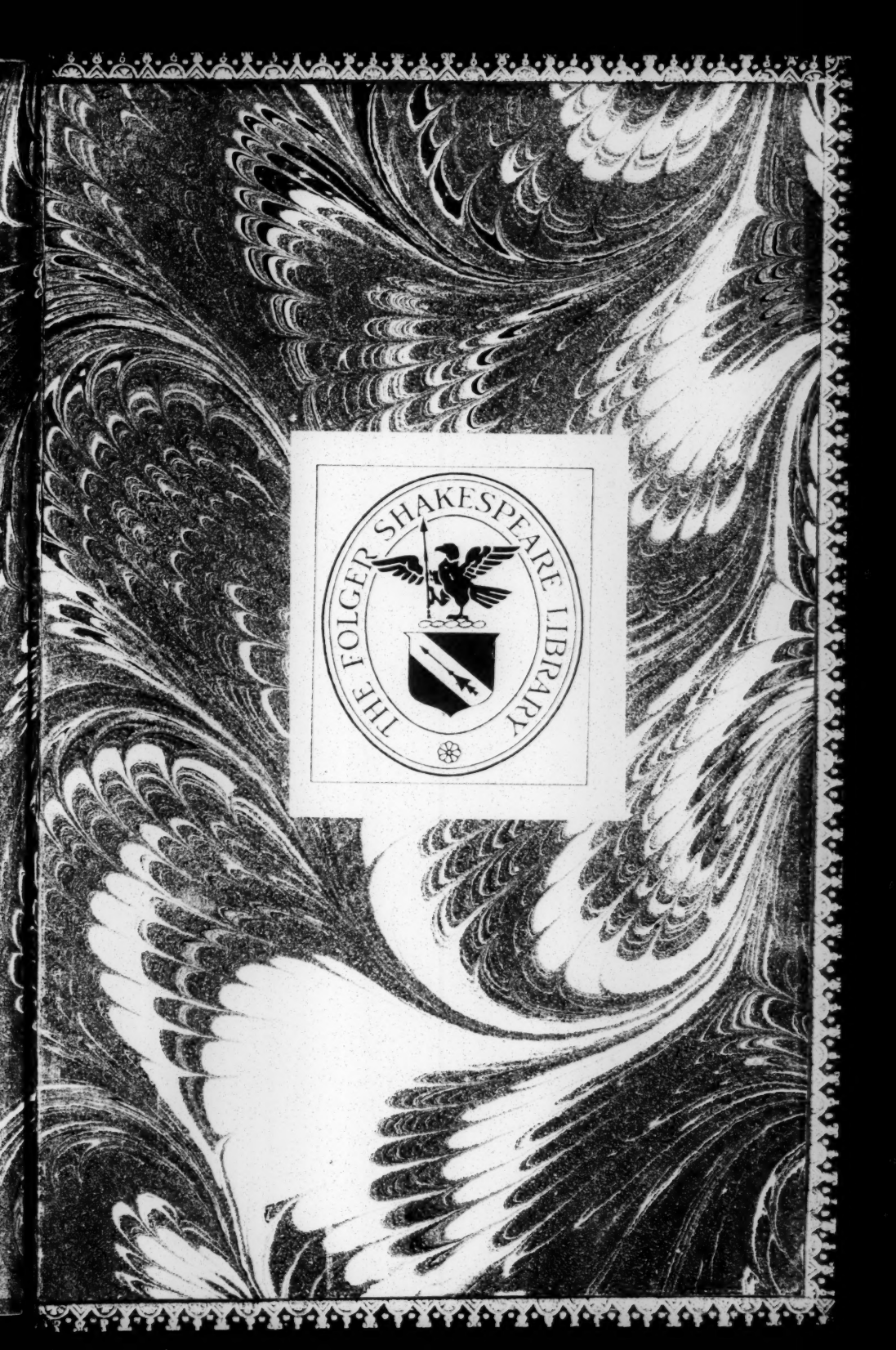
But,

But, in his place alone, the same maintain'd
(To his own hazzard) as it appertain'd
Unto the *honour, peace,* and *preservation*
Both of the *Royal persons,* and the *Nation,*
As he thought it oblig'd; and as it stood
In force, relating to the *will* of GOD
And, no jot further; unless, wee suppose
Hee err'd, in pressing it, to bar our foes
Who, *have been,* still *are,* and *will be* agen,
Foes unto GOD, to *Kings,* and *Common men,*
As soon as they themselves enabled finde,
To do the *work,* for which they were design'd:
For, that, which CROFTON most insisted on,
(As purpos'd by the *Covenant* to be done)
Is an exploding of the *Hierarchy*
Brought in, by *Antichristian-Prelacy,*
(To whose support, his *Oath* cannot extend
Who, CHRIST's *Faith,* is obliged to defend.)
And, if that, be a fault, GOD, mee forgive,
For, therein, I resolve, to dye, and live.

The *streets* of his *Case,* as appears to mee,
Lies there; if, hee of ought else guilty bee,
I, leave him to excuse himself; for, never
Saw I his face, nor shall perhaps for ever,
But, hee's in durance, and I fain would do
As, in his *Case,* I would bee done unto;
And, peradventure, it will needful bee
That, some, ere long, should do as much for mee.
There are, besides those actings, which do fall
Within the duties of our *Common-call,*
Some, having so peculiar Relation,
To GOD's *Designments* in our *Generation,*
That, they not onely do the force abate
Of what is call'd, *The Reason of the State,*
But, of those *precepts* also, at sometimes,
Whose violations are most *hainous Crimes,*
In any other case; as may appear,
By many proofs, which I will now forbear.
GOD, doth a *Generation-work* design;
For, ev'ry man: These, are a part of mine,
And, I had rather dye *ten deaths* for one
Than take *ten lives,* to let it bee undone.

GEORGE WITHER.

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